

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Acreages displayed in this document should be considered approximations even when displayed to the nearest acre. Most acreages were calculated from Geographic Information System coverage and rounded to the nearest 1,000 acres. As a result, the acreages presented may not match acres provided in prior published documents containing calculations from master title plats or other base data. The data used throughout this document are for land use planning purposes and not necessarily for on-the-ground implementation. The precision afforded by Geographic Information System calculation does not reflect project-level accuracy. Acreage figures that are provided in this document for land use plan analysis purposes would be refined as subsequent site-specific analysis is conducted.

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a programmatic Biological Opinion. Where appropriate, decisions in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS have been modified to incorporate the new conditions from the Biological Opinion into the Approved RMP. The Biological Opinion is included as Appendix D.

### **Air Resources**

The Clean Air Act requires the BLM to minimize emissions of air quality pollutants from activities on public lands to protect human health and the environment. The Clean Air Act also requires each state to develop a state implementation plan for regions within the state that have nonattainment status, to ensure that the national ambient air quality standards are attained and maintained for the criteria pollutants. Federal agencies are required to ensure that their actions conform to state implementation plans. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection is responsible for producing the state implementation plan. The Nevada Smoke Management Program coordinates and facilitates the statewide management of prescribed outdoor burning in the State of Nevada. This program is designed to meet the requirements of Nevada Revised Statutes 445B.100 through 445B.845, inclusive, which deal with air pollution, and the requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Interim Air Quality Policy on Wildland and Prescribed Fires (April 1998). The planning area is considered in attainment. The Clean Air Act places additional restrictions on impacts to air quality and visibility within Class I and II areas. Class I areas consist of many national wildlife refuges and most national parks and designated wilderness that existed when legislation was enacted in 1977. Class II areas include most other western public lands. Little degradation of air quality is allowed in Class I areas; less stringent requirements apply to Class II areas. There are no Class I areas in the planning area; the nearest Class I areas are the Jarbidge Wilderness in northeast Nevada and Zion National Park in southwest Utah.

### ***Goals – Air Resources***

Meet all applicable local, state, and tribal constraints, and National Ambient Air Quality Standards under the Clean Air Act (as amended), and prevent significant deterioration of air quality (defined as violation of air quality regulations) within the Ely planning area from all direct and authorized actions.

### ***Objectives – Air Resources***

To ensure air quality in the Ely planning area meets all National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

### ***Management Actions – Air Resources***

**AR-1:** Develop burn plans that include incident and cumulative air quality considerations prior to implementing all prescribed burn treatments.

**AR-2:** Coordinate with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection prior to the planning of prescribed fires and other air quality related actions.

**AR-3:** Authorize activities likely to adversely affect the Class II classification of public lands within the planning area, or the designation of the nearest Class I areas, such as Jarbidge Wilderness, on a case-by-case basis after compliance with appropriate laws.

### ***Monitoring– Air Resources***

On a project-specific basis, monitoring may be required to comply with state air quality permit requirements.

## **Water Resources**

Suitable water quality is important for proper ecological function as well as for supporting designated beneficial uses, including domestic supply (drinking water). The maintenance or improvement of water quality in streams and aquifers is, therefore, a major BLM management goal. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1977, as amended, (commonly known as the “Clean Water Act”) requires the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters. The State of Nevada has regulatory primacy in administering the Act within its boundaries. A Memorandum of Understanding identifies responsibilities and activities to be performed by each agency in carrying out water quality programs on agency-administered lands in Nevada. In addition to the Clean Water Act, numerous laws, regulations, policies, and Executive Orders direct the BLM to manage water quality for the benefit of the Nation and its economy, and to sustain multiple uses of the land. The BLM is required to maintain water quality where it presently meets approved state water quality requirements, guidelines, and objectives, and to improve water quality on public lands where it does not meet those requirements, guidelines, and objectives.

It is BLM policy to conform with applicable state laws and administrative claims procedures for water rights when managing and administering all BLM programs and projects, except as otherwise specifically mandated by Congress. The State Engineer Office, in the Division of Water Resources of the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, administers water rights programs in Nevada based on beneficial use and the Doctrine of Prior Appropriation. The State of Nevada regulates its water rights programs using guidance in chapters 533 and 534 of the Nevada Revised Statutes. The BLM will acquire and perfect water rights necessary for public land management purposes according to these state laws and

procedures. The BLM also will protect existing water rights of the U.S. by protesting or providing comment during the state permitting process on applications for new water rights or for changes to existing water rights that may interfere with BLM's ability to utilize such water for public land management purposes.

### ***Goals – Water Resources***

The quality of water resource on public lands administered by the Ely District Office will be suitable for the appropriate beneficial uses and will meet approved federal, state, tribal, and local requirements, guidelines, and objectives. The quantity of water on public lands administered by the Ely District Office will be suitable to meet public land management purposes.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Riparian and wetland areas exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria.

### ***Objectives – Water Resources***

To protect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters as needed to maintain healthy ecological systems and provide values that support multiple uses. Acquire and perfect sufficient water rights to meet public land management needs.

### ***Management Actions – Water Resources***

**WR-1:** Ensure authorized activities on public lands do not degrade water quality by complying with the Clean Water Act and Nevada Water Pollution Control Regulations (Nevada Revised Statute 445A). Cooperate with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection to reduce non-point source water pollution as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and Nevada Division of Environmental Protection dated September 2004.

**WR-2:** Integrate land health standards, best management practices, and appropriate mitigation measures into authorized activities to ensure water quality meets state requirements and BLM resource management objectives (BLM Manual 7240 Nevada Supplement).

**WR-3:** Recognize community wellhead protection areas approved by the State of Nevada and only authorize activities within such areas that do not have potential for degrading groundwater quality.

**WR-4:** Maintain or improve watershed conditions by controlling or restricting land uses and utilizing tools, where appropriate, to promote desired vegetation conditions.

### ***Monitoring – Water Resources***

Cooperation with state agencies, municipalities, industry, agriculture, universities, and other federal agencies in the planning area will occur to collect and interpret water resources data, and to participate in local, state, and regional water resources management. Aquifer recharge will be monitored at selected

representative wells and springs throughout the planning area and on nearby lands as access agreements allow. Water levels and spring flows and durations will be monitored periodically either by the Ely District Office individually or cooperatively with other agencies. Existing historical data will be retrieved as available and archived with new data. Stream channel geometry and flow data also will be collected periodically at selected perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral locations of interest. Meteorological data (e.g., precipitation, temperature, wind speed and direction, solar radiation, and relative humidity) also will be collected at selected locations. Site selection, data collection procedures, and the frequency of data collection will depend on the data type, prior knowledge of suitable and significant monitoring locations, budget and personnel considerations, and anticipated resource activities within specific locales. Water resources trends within the planning area will be reviewed periodically.

Water quality monitoring will be conducted at selected sites (wells, springs, and streams) for various parameters to compare applicable water quality requirements and objectives to current conditions. Data collection and interpretations will be performed either by the Ely District Office individually or cooperatively with other agencies. Water quality data collection will be conducted in coordination with the water quantity monitoring described above. Water quality constituents to be analyzed will be determined with due consideration of planning needs and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the State of Nevada. Sampling and analysis will follow standard field and laboratory protocols approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Drinking water sources will be protected by developing and implementing wellhead protection plans and assessing the presence and effects of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and other contaminants released to water resources by agriculture, municipalities, industry, and the BLM itself. Water quality trends will be reviewed periodically within the planning area for management purposes.

### **Soil Resources**

Soils are the growth medium for vegetation and the source of sediment in streams. Management goals for vegetation, watershed, wildlife, and livestock cannot be achieved without productive and stable soils.

#### ***Goals – Soil Resources***

Maintain or improve long-term soil quality.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform.

**Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Watershed soils and stream banks should have adequate stability to resist accelerated erosion, maintain soil productivity, and sustain the hydrologic cycle.

#### ***Objectives – Soil Resources***

To ensure that soils throughout the planning area exhibit infiltration and permeability appropriate to the soil type, with erosion and compaction having minimal effect on soil quality.

### ***Management Actions – Soil Resources***

**SR-1:** Restore and maintain desired range of conditions to increase infiltration, conserve soil moisture, promote groundwater recharge, and ground cover composition (including litter and biotic crusts) to increase or maintain surface soil stability and nutrient cycling.

**SR-2:** For soil disturbing actions which will require reclamation, salvage and stockpile all available growth medium prior to surface disturbances. Seed stock piles if they are to be left for more than one growing season. Re-contour all disturbance areas to blend as nearly as possible with the natural topography prior to re-vegetation. Rip all compacted portions of the disturbance to an appropriate depth based on site characteristics. Establish an adequate seed bed to provide good seed-to-soil contact.

**SR-3:** Protect soils from high compaction during surface disturbing activities through soil moisture and/or seasonal use restrictions commensurate with soil surface texture or other properties on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Monitoring – Soil Resources***

Soil health and condition will be monitored by conducting reviews of ground-disturbing projects for implementation and effectiveness of best management practices, and by periodically assessing selected undisturbed sites for various parameters including erosion and sedimentation, topsoil characteristics, and groundcover. Monitoring the effects of other resource management actions such as livestock grazing and watershed projects will consider soil condition and health. Baseline soil condition data will be provided through the ecological site inventories and watershed analyses. Site selection, data collection procedures, and the frequency of data collection will depend on the data type, prior knowledge of suitable and significant monitoring locations, budget and personnel considerations, and anticipated resource activities within specific locales. Soil quality trends within the planning area will be reviewed periodically for management purposes.

## **Vegetation Resources**

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Public Rangeland Improvement Act, and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, provide objectives and priorities for management of public land vegetation resources. Guidance contained in Title 43, Subpart 4180 of the Code of Federal Regulations directs public land management toward the maintenance or restoration of the physical function and biological health of vegetation systems. Land Health Standards for lands administered by the BLM in Nevada were approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 1997.

Ecological site descriptions will be used as the initial basis to guide integrated management/treatments to meet the desired goals and objectives for vegetation.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

Specific management actions and decisions will be implemented by vegetation community to achieve the desired range of conditions and objectives, and to meet the overall goal of vegetation in the Approved RMP. A variation of 5 percent above or below the values listed in the desired range of conditions for all vegetation communities is considered acceptable.

### ***Goals – Vegetation Resources***

Manage vegetation resources to achieve or maintain resistant and resilient ecological conditions while providing for sustainable multiple uses and options for the future across the landscape.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Habitats – Exhibit a healthy, productive and diverse population of native and/or desirable plant species, appropriate to the site characteristics, to provide suitable feed, water, cover, and living space for animal species and maintain ecological processes; habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of threatened and endangered species.

**Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Habitats and watersheds should sustain a level of biodiversity appropriate for the area and conducive to appropriate uses. Habitats of special status species should be able to sustain viable populations of those species.

### ***Objectives – Vegetation Resources***

To manage for resistant and resilient ecological conditions including healthy, productive, and diverse populations of native or desirable nonnative plant species appropriate to the site characteristics.

### ***Management Actions – Vegetation Resources***

#### **General Vegetation Management**

**VEG-1:** Emphasize treatment areas that have the best potential to maintain desired conditions or respond and return to the desired range of conditions and mosaic upon the landscape, using all available current or future tools and techniques.

**VEG-2:** Develop specific management objectives through the watershed analysis process, incorporating direction from activity plans (see Management Actions WL-8 and WL-15).

**VEG-3:** Adhere to the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Section 102 [e]) to protect old-growth characteristics or their equivalent.

**VEG-4:** Design management strategies to achieve plant composition within the desired range of conditions for vegetation communities, and emphasize plant and animal community health at the mid scale (watershed level).

**VEG-5:** Focus restoration of undesirable conditions initially on those sites that have not crossed vegetation transitional thresholds.

**VEG-6:** Emphasize the conservation and maintenance of healthy, resilient, and functional vegetation communities before restoration of other sites.

**VEG-7:** Determine seed mixes on a site-specific basis dependent on the probability of successful establishment. Use native and adapted species that compete with annual invasive species or meet other objectives.

**Parameter – Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands**

**VEG-8:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Table 2**.

**Table 2**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Pinyon-Juniper (Distribution of Woodland Phases and States)**

<b>State and Phase</b>	<b>Herbaceous State</b>	<b>Herbaceous State (Immature Woodland Phase)</b>	<b>Tree State (Mature Woodland Phase)</b>	<b>Tree State (Overmature Woodland Phase)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Altered State</b>
Canopy Description <sup>2</sup>	0 to 10% canopy cover- includes herbaceous, herbaceous-shrub, and sapling phase	11 to 20% canopy cover	21 to 35% canopy cover	>36 to 50% canopy cover	Site dominated by invasive species or weeds
LANDFIRE classes	A and B	C	D and E	E	Uncharacteristic
Approved RMP <sup>3</sup>	10% (359,300 acres)	20% (718,700 acres)	65% (2,335,700 acres)	5% (179,700 acres)	0% (0 acres)

<sup>1</sup> Overmature woodland refers to woodlands exhibiting greater than 35 percent canopy cover. This classification is not the same as "old growth" although the two classifications may coincide in some situations.

<sup>2</sup> Canopy descriptions derived from Natural Resource Conservation Service Ecological Site Descriptions.

<sup>3</sup> The Approved RMP approximates and incorporates the LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings models for Great Basin pinyon-juniper woodland. Altered state is an uncharacteristic condition not recognized by LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings models but is part of current conditions.

**VEG-9:** Integrate treatment priorities to include:

1. Public safety and protection from catastrophic wildland fire above other considerations.
2. Limit the transition of immature and mature phases to the overmature phase and from becoming infested with invasive species.
3. Direct overmature woodlands toward earlier phases (i.e., herbaceous state and phase) on a watershed basis, and only if existing immature and mature woodlands are considered resilient and do not need treatments to maintain resiliency.

## Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan

---

4. Manage for pinyon-juniper old-growth characteristics to include broad asymmetric tops, deeply furrowed bark, twisted trunks or branches, dead branches and spike tops, large lower limbs, hollow trunks (mostly in juniper), large trunk diameters relative to tree height, and branches covered with a bright yellow-green lichen on true woodland sites as defined by ecological site description.

### Parameter – Aspen

**VEG-10:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Table 3**.

**Table 3**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Aspen (Distribution of Phases and States)**

State and Phase	Herbaceous State (Herbaceous, and Herbaceous-Shrub and Sapling Phase)	Herbaceous State (Immature Woodland Phase)	Tree State (Mature Woodland Phase)	Tree State (Overmature Woodland Phase)
Canopy Cover <sup>1</sup>	0 to 15% tree canopy cover	16 to 29% tree canopy cover.	30 to 45% tree canopy cover	45% or greater tree canopy cover (includes conifer dominated)
LANDFIRE classes	A	B	C and D	D and E
Approved RMP <sup>2</sup>	14% (980 acres)	40% (2,800 acres)	45% (3,150 acres)	<1% (<70 acres)

<sup>1</sup> Canopy cover determined from Natural Resource Conservation Service Ecological Site Descriptions.

<sup>2</sup> The Approved RMP approximates and incorporates the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models for Rocky Mountain aspen forest and Inter-mountain Basin aspen-mixed conifer forest and woodland. Description of LANDFIRE CLASSES can be found at [www.landfire.gov](http://www.landfire.gov).

**VEG-11:** Integrate treatment priorities that include:

1. Areas where select species of conifers dominate the tree overstory and where canopy cover exceeds the percentages listed in the desired range of conditions in **Table 3** (Overmature Phase).
2. Areas where understory species are declining and aspen are not regenerating.
3. Managing aspen communities (using disturbance) to remain in or move toward those phases that are more resilient and resistant to disturbance.
4. Allowing regeneration to occur where potential allows, and to protect that regeneration through use restrictions or other protection methods.
5. Selecting and applying protection measures on a site-specific basis during implementation of the RMP.
6. Managing aspen stands to maintain or improve stand characteristics and promote regeneration.



**Parameter – High Elevation Conifer Species**

**VEG-12:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Tables 4** and **5**.

**Table 4**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of High Elevation Conifer (Distribution of States and Phases)**

<b>State and Phase</b>	<b>Herbaceous State, (Herbaceous, and Herbaceous/Sapling Phase)</b>	<b>Herbaceous State (Immature Phase)</b>	<b>Tree State (Mature Phase)</b>	<b>Tree State (Overmature Phase)<sup>1</sup></b>
Canopy Cover <sup>2</sup>	0 to 15% canopy Cover	16 to 31% canopy cover	31 to 40% canopy cover	41 to 60% canopy cover
LANDFIRE classes	A	B	C	C
Approved RMP <sup>3</sup>	20% (9,400 acres)	20% (9,400 acres)	50% (23,500 acres)	10% (4,700 acres)

<sup>1</sup> Overmature high elevation conifer refers to stands with canopy cover exceeding 40 percent. This classification is not the same as “old growth,” although the two classifications may coincide in some situations.

<sup>2</sup> Canopy cover derived from Natural Resource Conservation Service Ecological Site Descriptions.

<sup>3</sup> The Approved RMP approximates and incorporates the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models for Inter-Mountain white fir limber-bristlecone pine woodland (47,000 acres).

**Table 5**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Ponderosa Pine (Distribution of States and Phases)**

<b>State and Phase</b>	<b>Herbaceous State, (Herbaceous, and Herbaceous/Sapling Phase)</b>	<b>Tree State (Saplings and survivors)</b>	<b>Tree State (Mature Phase)</b>	<b>Tree State (Overmature Phase)</b>
Canopy Cover	0 to 5% canopy cover	5-10% canopy cover	10-20% canopy cover	Greater than 20% canopy cover
LANDFIRE Classes	A	C	D	B and E
Approved RMP <sup>1</sup>	10% (900 acres)	20% (1,800 acres)	60% (5,400 acres)	10% (900 acres)

<sup>1</sup> LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Model for southern Rocky Mountain ponderosa pine and appropriate ecological site descriptions.

**VEG-13:** Integrate treatment priorities that include:

1. Areas where tree overstory canopy is approaching threshold levels (i.e., self-thinning and understory is diminishing).
2. Areas where overstory tree canopy cover and density have crossed a threshold, and are restricting understory growth.

## Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan

---

3. Protect conifer trees, as appropriate, that meet the old growth criteria. General characteristics are: white fir, 24 inches diameter breast height and 75 feet in height; limber pine, 20 inches diameter breast height and 75 feet in height; ponderosa pine, 30 inches diameter breast height and 75 feet in height.

### Parameter – Salt Desert Shrub

**VEG-14:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Table 6**.

**Table 6**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Salt Desert Shrub (Distribution of Phases and States)**

Habitat Type	Herbaceous State	Shrub State	Altered State Annual Invasive/Exotic State	Altered State Perennial Nonnative Seeded
LANDFIRE classes	A	B and C	Uncharacteristic	Uncharacteristic
Approved RMP <sup>1</sup>	5% (61,050 acres)	77% (940,170 acres)	0% (0 acres)	18% (219,800 acres)

<sup>1</sup> The Approved RMP approximates and incorporates the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models for Inter-Mountain Basins mixed salt desert shrub and Inter-Mountain Basin greasewood flat. Altered state (invasive species/weeds) is an uncharacteristic condition not recognized by LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models but is part of current conditions.

**VEG-15:** Intensively manage areas currently in the herbaceous state to facilitate conversion to the shrub state.

### Parameter – Sagebrush (basin big sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, mountain big sagebrush, and black sagebrush)

**VEG-16:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Table 7**.

**Table 7**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Sagebrush (Distribution of Phases and States)**

State/Phase Name	Total Herbaceous State (Early, Mid, and Late Phases) <sup>1</sup>	Total Shrub State	Total Tree State	Altered State Annual/Perennial Invasive	Altered State Nonnative Perennial Seeded
LANDFIRE classes	A, B, and C	D	E	Uncharacteristic	Uncharacteristic
Approved RMP <sup>2</sup>	85% (4,776,500 acres)	5% (281,000 acres)	5% (281,000 acres)	0% (0 acres)	5% (281,000 acres)

<sup>1</sup> Sagebrush in the mid-late phase of the herbaceous state is desired for wildlife habitat.

<sup>2</sup> The Approved RMP approximates and incorporates the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models for Great Basin xeric mixed sagebrush and Inter-Mountain Basin big sagebrush. Altered states (annual/perennial invasive and nonnative perennial seeded) are an uncharacteristic condition not recognized by LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models but are part of current conditions.

**VEG-17:** Integrate treatments to:

1. Establish and maintain the desired herbaceous state or early shrub state where sagebrush is present along with a robust understory of perennial species.
2. Prioritize treatments toward restoration of sagebrush communities on areas with deeper soils and higher precipitation.

**VEG-18:** Manage native range to meet the requirements of wildlife species. Management will focus on maintaining or establishing diversity, mosaics, and connectivity of sagebrush between geographic areas at the mid and fine scales.

**Parameter – Mountain Mahogany**

**VEG-19:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Table 8**.

**Table 8**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Mountain Mahogany (Distribution of Phases and States)**

State and Phase	Herbaceous State (Herbaceous Phase)	Shrub State (Shrub/Herbaceous Phase)	Shrub State (Shrub Phase)	Shrub/Tree-like State (No Understory Phase) <sup>1</sup>
Canopy Cover <sup>2</sup>	0-15% mahogany canopy cover	15-25% mahogany canopy cover (desired mix of herbaceous and shrub species in understory)	30-45% mahogany canopy cover (approaching threshold with no understory)	45-60% mahogany cover (shrub/tree-like and tree dominant)
LANDFIRE classes	A and C	B	D	E
Approved RMP <sup>3</sup>	20% (9,200 acres)	20% (9,200 acres)	15% (6,900 acres)	45% (20,700 acres)

<sup>1</sup> Refers to savanna sites.

<sup>2</sup> Canopy cover determined from Natural Resource Conservation Service Ecological Site Descriptions.

<sup>3</sup> The Approved RMP approximates and incorporates the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Models for Inter-Mountain Basin mountain mahogany woodland and shrubland.

**VEG-20:** Integrate treatments in areas where:

1. Wildlife habitat requirements will receive the highest priority consideration when determining site-specific objectives in mountain mahogany sites.
2. Desirable understory is still present and where canopy cover is near threshold level or exceeds percentages listed for the desired range of conditions above (i.e., shrub/tree-like dominant state).

**Parameter – Mojave Desert Vegetation**

**VEG-21:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Tables 9** and **10**.

**Table 9**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Creosotebush and Bursage (Distribution of Phases and States)**

Habitat Type	Herbaceous State	Shrub State	Altered State (Annual Invasive and Exotics)	Perennial Nonnative Seeded State
LANDFIRE Classes	A	B	Uncharacteristic	Uncharacteristic
Approved RMP <sup>1</sup>	15% (54,825 acres)	70% (255,850 acres)	0% (0 acres)	15% (54,825 acres)

<sup>1</sup> In creosotebush/bursage communities, the herbaceous state and shrub state will correspond respectively to Class A and Class B as given in the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Model for Sonora-Mojave creosotebush-white bursage description. Altered states are an uncharacteristic condition not recognized by LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings models but are part of current conditions.

**Table 10**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Blackbrush (Distribution of Phases and States)**

Habitat Type	Herbaceous State	Shrub State	Altered State (Annual Invasive and Exotics)	Perennial Nonnative Seeded State
LANDFIRE Classes	A	B	Uncharacteristic	Uncharacteristic
Approved RMP <sup>1</sup>	15% (57,375 acres)	75% (286,875 acres)	0% (0 acres)	10% (38,250 acres)

<sup>1</sup> The herbaceous state and shrub state will correspond respectively to Class A and Class B as given in the LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting Model for Mojave mid-elevation desert scrub. Altered states are an uncharacteristic condition not recognized by LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings models but are part of current conditions.

**VEG-22:** Intensively manage areas currently in the herbaceous state to facilitate conversion to the shrub state.

**Parameter – Riparian/Wetlands**

**Desired Range of Conditions.** The Ely District Office is directed to follow the appropriate rangeland health standards. The Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council states “Riparian and wetland areas exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria.” The Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council specifies “Riparian and watershed vegetation should have structural and species diversity characteristic of the stage of stream channel succession in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, and capture, retain, and safely release water (watershed function).” In addition to achieving riparian proper functioning condition, composition, structure, and cover of riparian vegetation will occur within capabilities of the site. Ground cover and species composition will be appropriate to the site.

Riparian areas with free-flowing water (i.e., undeveloped springs) that are non-functional or functioning at risk will show improving trends toward proper functioning condition.

**VEG-23:** Promote vegetation structure and diversity that is appropriate and effective in controlling erosion, stabilizing stream banks, healing channel incisions, shading water, filtering sediment, and dissipating energy, in order to provide for stable water flow and bank stability.

**VEG-24:** Focus management actions on uses and activities that allow for the protection, maintenance, and restoration of riparian habitat.

**Parameter – Nonnative Seedings (Existing)**

**VEG-25:** Implement actions to attain the desired vegetation states shown in **Table 11**.

**Table 11**  
**Desired Range of Conditions of Seedings (Distribution of Phases and States)**

<b>Habitat Type</b>	<b>Herbaceous State</b>	<b>Shrub State</b>	<b>Tree State</b>	<b>Altered State (Annual Invasive)</b>
Approved RMP	65% (175,200 acres)	25% (67,400 acres)	10% (26,900 acres)	0% (0 acres)

**VEG-26:** Include the following integrated treatments:

1. Use of ecological site descriptions as references for identifying appropriate management of non-seeded species on the sites.
2. Management of seedings to allow sagebrush, perennial grasses, and forbs to become established on the site.

***Monitoring – Vegetation Resources***

Vegetation communities in both treated and untreated areas will be monitored to determine progress toward attaining desired range of conditions. Monitoring to determine success in meeting vegetation management objectives will shift to measuring cover, composition, and structure of the community (i.e., the parameters essential for identification of phases within the state and transition model concept). Periodic measurements of vigor and productivity will continue and will utilize standard methodologies (National Research Council 1994; Swanson 2006).

**Fish and Wildlife**

Section 102(8) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, states it is policy to manage public lands in a manner that will protect the quality of multiple resources and provide habitat for

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

fish, wildlife, domestic livestock, and wild horses. Standards and guidelines direct BLM to foster productive and diverse populations and communities of plants and animals. It also is BLM policy to cooperate with state agencies to accommodate species management population goals to the extent that they are consistent with the principles of multiple use management. The BLM acknowledges the role of the State of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Wildlife, under the direction of the State Board of Wildlife Commissioners, in managing, protecting, augmenting, and restoring fish and wildlife populations. The Ely District Office will work in close coordination with the State of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Wildlife and draw on and implement the goals, objectives, and actions outlined in Nevada's Wildlife Action Plan and various species management plans, as appropriate.

The ecological condition of the various vegetation communities greatly influences the quality of wildlife habitat. The Ely District Office fish and wildlife habitat management, as presented in this RMP, will emphasize restoration to achieve the desired range of conditions for the various vegetation communities.

### ***Goals – Fish and Wildlife***

Provide habitat for wildlife (i.e., forage, water, cover, and space) and fisheries that is of sufficient quality and quantity to support productive and diverse wildlife and fish populations, in a manner consistent with the principles of multi-use management, and to sustain the ecological, economic, and social values necessary for all species.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Habitats exhibit a healthy, productive and diverse population of native and/or desirable plant species, appropriate to the site characteristics, to provide suitable feed, water, cover and living space for animal species and maintain ecological processes. Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of threatened and endangered species.

**Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Habitats and watersheds should sustain a level of biodiversity appropriate for the area and conducive to appropriate uses. Habitats of special status species should be able to sustain viable populations of those species.

### ***Objectives – Fish and Wildlife***

To manage suitable habitat for aquatic species, priority wildlife species, and migratory birds in a manner that will benefit wildlife species directly or indirectly and minimize conflicts among species and wildlife or habitat losses from permitted activities. Priority species for terrestrial wildlife habitat management are elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, desert bighorn sheep, and migratory birds; because these species cover the entire Ely RMP planning area. Priority habitats include calving/fawning/kidding/lambing grounds, crucial summer range, crucial winter range, and occupied desert bighorn sheep habitat.

To use wildlife water developments, both natural and artificial, to improve the condition of wildlife habitat, and to use artificial wildlife water developments to mitigate impacts to wildlife species from loss of natural water sources or loss of habitat.

***Management Actions – Fish and Wildlife***

**General Wildlife Habitat Management (Aquatic and Terrestrial)**

**WL-1:** Emphasize management of priority habitats for priority species. (See the discussion on Vegetation Resources for the desired range of conditions for the various vegetation communities.) See **Map 3, Map 4, Map 5, and Map 6.**

**WL-2:** Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

**WL-3:** Consider objectives listed in the appropriate U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan when managing wildlife habitat adjacent to a national wildlife refuge.

**WL-4:** Mitigate all discretionary permitted activities that result in the loss of aquatic and priority wildlife habitats by improving 2 acres of comparable habitat for every 1 acre of lost habitat as determined on a project-by-project basis (see **Map 3, Map 4, Map 5, and Map 6**).

**Parameter – Elk, Mule Deer, Pronghorn Antelope, and Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Habitats**

**WL-5:** In coordination with Nevada Department of Wildlife, update priority habitats for elk, pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, as well as other seasonal habitats for these priority species (see **Map 3, Map 4, Map 5, and Map 6**).

**WL-6:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities in big game calving/fawning/kidding/lambing grounds and crucial summer range from April 15 through June 30 (see **Map 3, Map 4, Map 5, and Map 6**).

**WL-7:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities in crucial winter range from November 1 through March 31 (see **Map 3, Map 4, Map 5, and Map 6**).

**WL-8:** Focus restoration projects initially in priority habitats (i.e., calving/fawning/kidding/lambing grounds, crucial summer range, and crucial winter range), and then in other seasonal habitats within a watershed (see **Map 3, Map 4, Map 5, and Map 6**).

**WL-9:** Manage elk habitat by implementing the actions and strategies identified in the Central Nevada, Lincoln County, and White Pine County Elk Management Plans that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement, and that are consistent with watershed restoration strategies.

**WL-10:** Manage habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the Snake Range. Manage domestic sheep and goats in accordance with current BLM policy when changes to BLM grazing permits are being considered in the Snake Range.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

**WL-11:** Consider managing habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in unoccupied ranges if and when domestic sheep grazing no longer occurs in the area (see **Map 6**).

### **Parameter – Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

**WL-12:** Manage desert bighorn sheep habitat in all occupied ranges (see **Map 6**). Manage domestic sheep and goats in accordance with current BLM policy when changes to BLM grazing permits are being considered.

**WL-13:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities within occupied desert bighorn sheep habitat from March 1 through May 31 and from July 1 through August 31 (see **Map 6**).

**WL-14:** Consider managing habitat for desert bighorn sheep in unoccupied ranges if and when domestic sheep grazing no longer occurs in the area (see **Map 6**).

### **Parameter – Migratory Bird Habitat**

**WL-15:** Identify the spatial and temporal habitat needs for those migratory bird species of concern for the sagebrush biome to help achieve the desired range of conditions of the various vegetation communities (see the discussion on Vegetation Resources).

**WL-16:** When planning projects, consider migratory birds, as appropriate, to minimize take and limit impacts.

**WL-17:** Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife and other partners (e.g., Great Basin Bird Observatory, Partners in Flight) to conduct breeding bird surveys to document the population status and trends of those migratory bird species of concern.

### **Parameter – Wildlife Water Developments**

**WL-18:** Restore natural water sources (i.e., springs and seeps) to increase water availability through restoration of riparian habitats and proper livestock and wild horse management.

**WL-19:** Identify areas of suitable wildlife habitat that are water limited in coordination with the Nevada Department of Wildlife and interested public (i.e., elk management technical review teams, sportsmen groups, etc.).

**WL-20:** Use the criteria listed below to identify artificial wildlife water developments:

- To mitigate for loss of natural water sources;
- To mitigate for habitat loss or habitat fragmentation;
- To reduce inter-specific competition between wildlife, livestock, and wild horses;



- To reduce inter-specific competition between wildlife species; and
- In suitable wildlife habitat that is water limited.

### ***Monitoring – Fish and Wildlife***

Periodic inventories of fisheries are conducted by the Nevada Department of Wildlife on perennial streams and reservoirs. The Ely District Office will coordinate with the Nevada Department of Wildlife in review of information relating to management of fisheries habitat on public lands.

Baseline wildlife use patterns and estimated population levels will be calculated using information collected annually by the Nevada Department of Wildlife. These will be compared with post-treatment use patterns and population numbers to determine relative effectiveness of watershed restoration. Forage production will be monitored on an allotment basis during livestock allotment evaluations. Annual livestock and wild horse utilization records gathered by Ely District Office staff and wildlife observations reported by the Nevada Department of Wildlife and Ely District Office will be used to determine possible conflicts. Conflicts between livestock, wild horses, and wildlife will be resolved during the assessments and subsequent management actions including appropriate management level adjustments in herd management areas, cooperative habitat management actions with Nevada Department of Wildlife, and grazing permit renewals. Impacts to wildlife populations will take into account changes in herd management objectives as set by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

### **Special Status Species**

Section 102(8) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, requires that public land be managed to protect the quality of multiple resources and to provide habitat for fish, wildlife, domestic livestock, and wild horses. Special status species include federally listed, proposed, or candidate species; state listed species; and BLM sensitive species. The BLM must follow the requirements of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and BLM policy to conserve federally listed threatened and endangered species and the ecological systems on which they depend. BLM policy also states, "...ensure that actions requiring authorization or approval by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM or Bureau) are consistent with the conservation needs of special status species and do not contribute to the need to list any special status species, either under provisions of the ESA or other provisions of this policy." The Ely District Office will manage special status species following the direction and guidance identified in BLM Manual 6840; recovery plans; biological opinions; conservation agreements, plans, and strategies; habitat conservation plans; and the recommendations from interagency recovery implementation teams.

### ***Goals – Special Status Species***

Manage public lands to conserve, maintain, and restore special status species populations and their habitats; support the recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species; and preclude the need to list additional species.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.**

- Habitats exhibit a healthy, productive, and diverse population of native and/or desirable plant species, appropriate to the site characteristics, to provide suitable feed, water, cover, and living space for animal species and maintain ecological processes. Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of threatened and endangered species.
- Riparian and wetland areas exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria.

**Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.**

- Habitats and watersheds should sustain a level of biodiversity appropriate for the area and conducive to appropriate uses. Habitats of special status species should be able to sustain viable populations of those species.
- Watersheds should possess the necessary ecological components to achieve state water quality criteria, maintain ecological processes, and sustain appropriate uses. Riparian and wetlands vegetation should have structural and species diversity characteristic of the stage of stream channel succession to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, and capture, retain, and safely release water (watershed function).

***Objectives – Special Status Species***

To manage suitable habitat for special status species in a manner that will benefit these species directly or indirectly and minimize loss of individuals or habitat from permitted activities.

Management in Great Basin riparian habitat will benefit the following special status species:

- Pahrump poolfish (federally listed endangered species)
- White River spinedace (federally listed endangered species)
- Railroad Valley springfish (federally listed threatened species)
- Big Spring spinedace (federally listed threatened species)
- Ute ladies'-tresses (federally listed threatened species)

Management in Mojave Desert and Great Basin riparian habitat will benefit the following special status species:

- Southwestern willow flycatcher (federally listed endangered species)
- Western yellow-billed cuckoo (federal candidate species)
- Meadow Valley Wash desert sucker (BLM sensitive species)

- Meadow Valley Wash speckled dace (BLM sensitive species)
- Arizona southwestern toad (BLM sensitive species)

Management in Mojave Desert riparian habitat will benefit the following special status species:

- White River springfish (federally listed endangered species)
- Hiko White River springfish (federally listed endangered species)
- Pahranaagat roundtail chub (federally listed endangered species)

Management in Mojave Desert scrub habitat will benefit the following special status species:

- Desert tortoise (federally listed threatened species)
- Banded Gila monster (BLM sensitive species)

To manage Mojave Desert and Great Basin desert scrub and salt desert shrub habitats for the benefit of the following special status species:

- Western burrowing owl (BLM sensitive species)
- Sunnyside green gentian (BLM sensitive species)

To manage Great Basin sagebrush habitats for the benefit of the following special status species:

- Greater sage-grouse (BLM sensitive species)
- Pygmy rabbit (BLM sensitive species)

### ***Management Actions – Special Status Species***

#### **Parameter – Special Status Species Habitat**

**SS-1:** Prioritize conservation, maintenance, and restoration actions for special status species based on the following order of importance: 1) federally listed endangered species, 2) federally listed threatened species, 3) federal proposed species, 4) federal candidate species, and 5) BLM sensitive species.

**SS-2:** Develop and implement an interagency inventory and monitoring program for special status plant and animal species.

**SS-3:** Participate on interagency recovery implementation teams to identify and address implementation of management actions for the recovery of listed species in the Ely planning area.

**SS-4:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities from May 1 through July 15 within 0.5 mile of raptor nest sites unless the nest site has been determined to be inactive for at least the previous 5 years.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

**SS-5:** Manage Bonneville cutthroat trout habitat by implementing those actions and strategies identified in the Conservation Agreement and Conservation Strategy for Bonneville Cutthroat Trout in the State of Nevada that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement.

**SS-6:** Use the Revised Nevada Bat Conservation Plan (Bradley et al. 2006) for guidance on implementation of bat management actions, such as:

- Bat-friendly techniques for abandoned mine closures;
- Proper bat surveys of abandoned mines identified for hard closure techniques;
- Improving livestock grazing of riparian and upland habitat;
- Limiting off-highway vehicle travel in or near riparian habitat;
- Stopping conversion of native sagebrush vegetation communities to annual grasslands, and restoration to native rangelands;
- Installing escape ramps in artificial water sources;
- Monitoring wind energy development projects; and
- Rehabilitating areas damaged by fires.

**SS-7:** Implement management actions identified in the Ely Cave Management Plan (BLM 1986) (i.e., closures, bat gates, etc.) to protect bats, on a case-by-case basis.

**SS-8:** In vegetation communities, especially riparian areas and pinyon-juniper woodlands, consider the habitat needs of obligate bat species in restoration treatments.

**SS-9:** Perform springsnail surveys prior to the development of any spring source.

**SS-10:** Mitigate all discretionary permitted activities that result in the loss of special status species habitats on a ratio of 2 acres of comparable habitat for every 1 acre of lost habitat as determined on a project-by-project basis. This will not apply to desert tortoise habitat as remuneration fees and other measures to minimize effects to the tortoise are required for disturbance in desert tortoise habitat.

### **Parameter – Great Basin Riparian Habitat**

**SS-11:** Manage the refugium at Shoshone Ponds for Pahrump poolfish in accordance with the Recovery Plan for the Pahrump Killifish (now called the Pahrump poolfish) (also see Appendix D).

**SS-12:** Expand the fenced area at Shoshone Ponds (also see Appendix D).

**SS-13:** Manage the uplands around Shoshone Ponds to increase vegetation cover, reduce runoff, and prevent excessive siltation into the ponds (also see Appendix D).

**SS-14:** Develop additional ponds at Shoshone Ponds to increase the habitat for the Pahrump poolfish. This development would be consistent with the Biological Opinion (Appendix D).

**SS-15:** Manage public lands adjacent to designated critical habitat for the White River spinedace, located on private land, in accordance with the White River Spinedace Recovery Plan (also see Appendix D).

**SS-16:** Manage public lands adjacent to designated critical habitat for the Railroad Valley springfish, located on the Duckwater Indian Reservation, in accordance with the Railroad Valley Springfish Recovery Plan (also see Appendix D).

**SS-17:** Manage Big Spring spinedace habitat by implementing those actions and strategies identified in the Big Spring Spinedace Recovery Plan that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement, and in accordance with the Condor Canyon Habitat Management Plan (also see Appendix D).

**SS-18:** In cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, survey appropriate habitats on public lands in Lincoln County for the Ute ladies'-tresses. Develop and implement conservation and recovery actions for any populations that may be discovered (also see Appendix D).

**Parameter – Mojave Desert and Great Basin Riparian Habitats**

**SS-19:** Manage southwestern willow flycatcher habitat by implementing those actions and strategies identified in the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Recovery Plan and appropriate actions from future habitat conservation plans that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement (also see Appendix D).

**SS-20:** Limit livestock grazing in the Lower Meadow Valley Wash ACEC through terms and conditions and/or season-of-use restrictions on grazing permits in accordance with a site-specific ACEC plan (also see Appendix D).

**Parameter – Mojave Desert Riparian Habitat**

**SS-21:** Manage White River springfish habitat at Ash Spring by implementing those actions and strategies identified in the Recovery Plan for the Aquatic and Riparian Species of Pahrangat Valley and the Ash Springs Coordinated Management Plan that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement (also see Appendix D).

**SS-22:** Manage public lands adjacent to designated critical habitat for the Hiko White River springfish, located on private land, in accordance with the Recovery Plan for the Aquatic and Riparian Species of Pahrangat Valley (also see Appendix D).

**SS-23:** Manage public lands adjacent to the aquatic habitat for the Pahrangat roundtail chub, located on private and state land, in accordance with the Recovery Plan for the Aquatic and Riparian Species of Pahrangat Valley (also see Appendix D).

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

### **Parameter – Mojave Desert Scrub Habitat**

**SS-24:** Manage desert tortoise habitat by implementing those actions and strategies identified in the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan, and appropriate actions from future habitat conservation plans that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement (also see Appendix D).

**SS-25:** Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Nevada Department of Wildlife to inventory desert tortoise habitat and desert tortoise populations. Management would be consistent with the Biological Opinion (also see Appendix D).

**SS-26:** Implement an interagency monitoring program for desert tortoise habitat and desert tortoise populations, approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group (also see Appendix D).

**SS-27:** Cooperate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services in a program to control desert tortoise predators (also see Appendix D).

**SS-28:** Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Nevada Department of Wildlife to develop approved translocation research projects for desert tortoises (also see Appendix D).

**SS-29:** Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Federal Highway Administration, the Nevada Department of Transportation, and Lincoln County to install tortoise-proof fencing and crossing culverts along U.S. Highway 93 in the Kane Springs ACEC and along other roads, as needed, in all three desert tortoise ACECs (also see Appendix D).

**SS-30:** Manage leased public lands in the Coyote Springs area in accordance with Public Law 100-275 dated March 31, 1988, and the Land Lease Agreement signed July 14, 1988.

**SS-31:** Limit maintenance of existing roads to the existing disturbance and perform maintenance in accordance with specifications provided by the Ely District Office in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (also see Appendix D).

**SS-32:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities from March 1 through October 31 within desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7** and Appendix D).

**SS-33:** Implement the following management actions for desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7**). Implement the additional conditions for desert tortoise and conditions for the Southwest willow flycatcher, White River springfish, Pahump poolfish, and Big Springs spinedace habitat contained in the 2008 Biological Opinion (Appendix D) (also refer to discussions on Wild Horses, Lands and Realty, Recreation, Geology and Minerals, and Fire Management).

- Within desert tortoise ACECs: If fence construction occurs during the tortoise active season, a qualified tortoise biologist will be onsite during construction of the tortoise-proof fence to ensure that no tortoises are harmed. If the fence is constructed during the tortoise inactive season, a qualified tortoise biologist will thoroughly examine the proposed fence line and burrows for the presence of tortoises no more than three days before construction. Any desert tortoises or eggs found in the fence line will be relocated offsite by the biologist in accordance with approved protocol (Desert Tortoise Council 1994, 1999). Tortoise burrows that occur immediately outside of the fence alignment that can be avoided by fence construction activities will be clearly marked to prevent crushing.
- Within desert tortoise ACECs: Projects will require fencing, unless determined by the BLM authorized officer and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the project should not be fenced. In accordance with current specifications, fencing will consist of 1-inch horizontal by 2-inch vertical mesh. The mesh will extend at least 18 inches aboveground and, where feasible, 6 to 12 inches belowground. In situations where it is not feasible to bury the fence, the lower 6 to 12 inches of the fence will be bent at a 90 degree angle towards potentially approaching tortoises and covered with cobble or other suitable material to ensure that tortoise or other animals cannot dig underneath.
- Within desert tortoise ACECs: Tortoise fencing will be inspected on a quarterly basis, and any repairs completed within 72 hours from March 1 through October 31, and within 7 days from November 1 through February 28/29. The operator will inspect the fencing at least on a quarterly basis and after major precipitation events to ensure zero ground clearance. Monitoring and maintenance will include regular removal of trash and sediment accumulation and restoration of zero ground clearance between the ground and the bottom of the fence, including re-covering the bent portion of the fence if not buried. The operator will perform maintenance when needed including removing trash, sediment accumulation, and other debris. Fencing will be removed upon termination and reclamation of the project, or when it is determined by the BLM authorized officer and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the fence is no longer necessary.
- Within desert tortoise ACECs: During surface-disturbing activities, tortoise burrows will be avoided whenever possible. If a tortoise is found onsite during project activities, which may result in take of the tortoise (i.e., in harm's way), such activities will cease until the tortoise moves, or is moved, out of harm's way. The tortoise will be moved by a qualified tortoise biologist. All workers also will be instructed to check underneath all vehicles before moving such vehicles and within stockpiled materials. Tortoises often take cover under vehicles and construct burrows in stockpiled material.
- Within desert tortoise ACECs: The BLM authorized officer will approve the selected consulting firm/biologist to be used by the applicant to implement the terms and conditions of the permit issued by the BLM. Any biologist and/or firm not previously approved will submit a curriculum vitae and be approved by the BLM authorized officer. Other personnel may assist with implementing terms and conditions that involve tortoise handling, monitoring, or surveys, only under direct field supervision of the approved, qualified biologist.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Within desert tortoise ACECs: Tortoises and nests that are found will be handled and relocated by a qualified tortoise biologist in accordance with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved protocol. Burrows containing tortoises or nests will be excavated by hand, with hand tools, to allow removal of the tortoise or eggs. Desert tortoises moved during the tortoise inactive season or those in hibernation, regardless of date, will be placed into an adequate burrow; if one is not available, one will be constructed in accordance with Desert Tortoise Council protocol. During mild temperature periods in the spring and early fall, tortoises removed from the site will not necessarily be placed in a burrow. Tortoises and burrows will only be relocated to federally managed lands. If the responsible federal agency is not the BLM, verbal permission, followed by written concurrence, will be obtained before relocating the tortoise or eggs to lands not managed by the BLM.
- Desert tortoises moved in the winter (i.e., November 1 through February 28/29), or those in hibernation regardless of date, will be placed into an adequate burrow; if one is not available, one will be constructed utilizing the protocol for burrows in Section B.5.f. of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved guidelines (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1994).
- All projects in desert tortoise habitat will be reviewed by the BLM's wildlife staff to ensure that appropriate measures have been incorporated into the BLM authorization (e.g., material site, land sale, or off-highway vehicle event) to minimize the potential take of desert tortoise and loss of habitat.
- A BLM representative(s) will be designated and will be responsible for overseeing compliance with terms and conditions of all permitted activities and reporting requirements. The designated representative will provide coordination among the permittee, project proponent, the BLM, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### **Parameter – Mojave and Great Basin Desert Scrub and Salt Desert Shrub Habitats**

**SS-34:** Identify the spatial and temporal habitat needs for the western burrowing owl to help achieve the desired range of conditions of the various vegetation communities (see the discussion on Vegetation Resources).

**SS-35:** Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife and other partners (e.g., Great Basin Bird Observatory, Partners in Flight) to conduct breeding bird surveys to document the population status and trends of western burrowing owls.

**SS-36:** Inventory and monitor populations of the Sunnyside green gentian in conjunction with the development of the White River Valley AEC management plan.

### **Parameter – Great Basin Sagebrush Habitat**

**SS-37:** Manage greater sage-grouse habitat by implementing those actions and strategies identified in the BLM National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy, Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan for



Nevada and Eastern California, and local greater sage-grouse conservation plans that the Ely District Office has the authority to implement (also see Appendix D).

**SS-38:** Maintain intact and quality sagebrush habitat. Prioritize habitat maintenance actions from the BLM National Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy to: 1) maintain large areas of high quality sagebrush currently occupied by greater sage-grouse; 2) maintain habitats which connect seasonal sagebrush habitats in occupied source habitats; and 3) maintain habitats that connect seasonal sagebrush habitats in occupied isolated habitats (also see Appendix D).

**SS-39:** Implement proactive and large scale management actions to restore lost, degraded, or fragmented sagebrush habitats and increase greater sage-grouse populations. Prioritize habitat restoration actions from the BLM National Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy to: 1) reconnect large patches of high quality seasonal habitats, which greater sage-grouse currently occupy; 2) enlarge sagebrush habitat in areas greater sage-grouse currently occupy; 3) reconnect stronghold/source habitats currently occupied by greater sage-grouse with isolated habitats currently occupied by greater sage-grouse; 4) reconnect currently occupied and isolated habitats; 5) restore potential sagebrush habitats that currently are not occupied by greater sage-grouse. Develop allowable use restrictions in greater sage-grouse habitats undergoing restoration, on a case-by-case basis, as dictated by monitoring (also see Appendix D).

**SS-40:** Outside of designated corridors, above-ground facilities will not be constructed within 0.25 mile of greater sage-grouse leks. Underground facilities will not be installed within 0.25 mile of greater sage-grouse leks unless the vegetation can be established to pre-disturbance conditions within a reasonable period of time. No new roads will be constructed within 0.25 mile of greater sage-grouse leks. Exceptions may be granted by the authorized officer, in consultation with Nevada Department of Wildlife, if the project can be designed so that it will not affect breeding activity nor degrade the integrity of the habitat associated with the lek, or if the lek has been inactive for at least 5 consecutive years or the habitat has changed such that there is no likelihood that the lek will become active.

**SS-41:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities from March 1 through May 15 within 2 miles of an active greater sage-grouse lek (see **Map 8**).

**SS-42:** Where appropriate, restrict permitted activities from November 1 through March 31 within greater sage-grouse winter range (see **Map 8**).

**SS-43:** Survey all proposed ground disturbing activities in suitable pygmy rabbit habitat utilizing the appropriate protocol. Surveys will be completed by a qualified biologist approved by the Ely District Office (also see Appendix D).

### ***Monitoring – Special Status Species***

In conjunction with other private, state, or federal agencies, monitoring of known populations of special status species that are considered to be important indicators or obligates to a particular habitat community type (such as greater sage-grouse for sagebrush communities) will continue. Monitoring could consist of

intensive research projects or passive population inventories designed to help identify the extent of the populations and habitats being used. Inventories for special status species will be completed within the planning area and information will be used to measure the effectiveness in meeting management objectives on a landscape level and watershed basis.

### **Wild Horses**

The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195) requires the BLM to protect and manage wild horses in areas where they were found at the time of the Act, in a manner designed to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance in keeping with the multiple use management concept of public lands. These requirements are further detailed in the Standards and Guidelines for Wild Horses and Burros developed by the Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council and the Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council.

#### ***Goals – Wild Horses***

Maintain and manage healthy, self-sustaining wild horse herds inside herd management areas within appropriate management levels to ensure a thriving natural ecological balance while preserving a multiple-use relationship with other uses and resources.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Healthy wild horse and burro populations exhibit characteristics of healthy, productive, and diverse population. Age structure and sex ratios are appropriate to maintain the long-term viability of the population as a distinct group. Herd management areas are able to provide suitable feed, water, cover and living space for wild horses and burros and maintain historic patterns of habitat use.

**Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Wild horses and burros within herd management areas should be managed for herd viability and sustainability. Herd management areas should be managed to maintain a healthy ecological balance among wild horse and/or burro populations, wildlife, livestock, and vegetation.

#### ***Objectives – Wild Horses***

To maintain wild horse herds at appropriate management levels within herd management areas where sufficient habitat resources exist to sustain healthy populations at those levels.

Herds will consist of healthy animals that exhibit diverse age structure, good conformation, and any characteristics unique to the specific herd.

**Management Actions – Wild Horses**

**General Wild Horse Management**

**WH-1:** Do not authorize domestic horse grazing permits within wild horse herd management areas (see **Map 9**).

**WH-2:** Coordinate wild horse management with other federal and state jurisdictions and resource management agencies.

**WH-3:** Do not construct permanent fences that prohibit the free-roaming behavior of wild horses or prevent wild horses from moving within herd management areas. Remove existing fences within herd management areas that restrict the free-roaming behavior of wild horses.

**Parameter – Herd Management Area Establishment**

**WH-4:** Manage wild horses within six herd management areas designated from herd areas (see **Map 9**) based on wild horse use and habitat suitability listed in **Table 12** covering approximately 3.7 million acres.

**Table 12**  
**Herd Management Areas**

<b>Herd Management Areas</b>	<b>Size Acres</b>	<b>Initial Appropriate Management Level</b>
Pancake	855,000	240-493
Triple B	1,225,000	250-518
Antelope	331,000	150-324
Silver King	606,000	60-128
Eagle	670,000	100-210
Diamond Hills South <sup>1</sup>	19,000	10-22
	<b>3,705,000</b>	<b>810-1,695</b>

<sup>1</sup> Managed as a complex with Elko and Battle Mountain BLM.

**WH-5:** Remove wild horses and drop herd management area status for those areas that do not provide sufficient habitat resources to sustain healthy populations as listed in **Table 13**.

**Parameter – Population Management**

**WH-6:** Initially manage the appropriate management level as a range between 810 and 1,695 animals on all herd management areas within the planning area. Manage populations within ranges of appropriate management levels in which the upper level is based on available habitat and the lower level is based on the projected recruitment rate between gather cycles as developed from herd monitoring data (see **Table 12**).

**Table 13**  
**Herd Management Areas Dropped**

<b>Herd Management Areas</b>	<b>Public Land Area (acres)<sup>1</sup></b>
Antelope (west of Highway 93)	62,900
Applewhite	30,300
Blue Nose Peak	84,600
Cherry Creek (eastern portion)	3,200
Clover Creek	33,100
Clover Mountains	168,000
Delamar Mountains	183,600
Highland Peak (southern 2/3)	65,500
Jakes Wash	153,700
Little Mountain	53,000
Meadow Valley Mountains	94,500
Miller Flat	89,400
Moriah	53,300
Rattlesnake (southern 1/2)	37,400
Seaman	358,800
White River	116,300
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,587,600</b>

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to hundreds.

**WH-7:** Base adjustments to appropriate management levels on monitoring data and perform adjustments typically, but not exclusively, in conjunction with the watershed analysis process.

**WH-8:** Manage sex ratios, phenotypic traits, reproductive cycles, and other population dynamics on a herd management area basis.

**WH-9:** Implement the following management actions for desert tortoise habitat (also refer to the discussion on Special Status Species). The Ely District Office does not plan to manage for any wild horses in desert tortoise habitat and this management only will be used if emergency gathers are needed in the future should wild horses reenter the area.

- For gathers: Trap sites should be located at previous trap site locations or in previously disturbed areas, where possible. All trap and holding sites, and access routes will be cleared by a qualified tortoise biologist before the trap and holding facilities are set up. The parcel will be surveyed for desert tortoise using survey techniques that provide 100 percent coverage.
- For gathers: Holding facilities will not be located inside ACECs. If possible, they should be located outside of desert tortoise habitat. If they cannot be located outside of desert tortoise habitat, they should be placed in previously disturbed areas.

- For gathers: All vehicle use in desert tortoise habitat will be restricted to existing roads and trails and within surveyed areas. Vehicles will not exceed 25 mph.
- For gathers: Trash and garbage will be contained in a covered, raven-proof trash receptacle and disposed of off-site in a designated facility. No trash or garbage will be buried at the sites.
- For gathers: Use of hay or grains as enticements into the traps will not occur within desert tortoise habitat to avoid the introduction of nonnative plant species. The feeding of hay or grains to animals will not be allowed within ACECs. The feeding of hay or grains to animals at holding facilities on public land within desert tortoise habitat will be avoided when possible.

### ***Monitoring – Wild Horses***

Aerial and ground census information periodically will be gathered to determine the number of adults and foals, colors, special characteristics, and overall health of each wild horse herd. Aerial counts will occur at a minimum of once every 3 years. Other herd data, including the ratio of mares to studs, age classes, colors, special characteristics, and overall health will be collected during gathers and at the time wild horses are processed for adoption. Wild horse actual use of forage will be estimated by multiplying inventoried or estimated numbers of horses by the length of grazing period on their summer and winter ranges. Utilization and trend study methods are the same as presented in the monitoring section for Livestock Grazing Management. Data collected in other studies, such as watershed analyses, monitoring of vegetation treatments, special status plants and animals, microbiotic crusts, wildlife, water resources, weeds, riparian, and wetland sources may be used to determine the effects of wild horses on these resources.

## **Cultural Resources**

Management of cultural resources is directed primarily by two laws: the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979. The National Historic Preservation Act requires management and enhancement of significant historic properties and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act requires protection of archaeological resources (sites and objects of 100 years or more in age). The Federal Land Policy and Management Act directs the BLM to manage public lands on the basis of multiple use and to “protect the quality of historical resources and archaeological values.” This act provides for the periodic inventory of public lands and resources.

### ***Goals – Cultural Resources***

Identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations (Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Section 103(c), 201(a), and (c); National Historic Preservation Act, Section 110(a); Archaeological Resources Protection Act, Section 14 [a]).

Seek to reduce imminent threats and resolve potential conflicts from natural or human-caused deterioration, or potential conflict with other resource uses (Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Section 103(c),

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, 110[a][2]) by ensuring that all authorizations for land use and resource use will comply with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106.

**Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standard.** Land use plan will recognize cultural resources within the context of multiple use.

### ***Objectives – Cultural Resources***

To protect and maintain cultural resources on BLM-administered land in stable condition. Appropriate management actions will be determined after evaluation and allocation of cultural resource use categories through cultural resource project plans.

### ***Management Actions – Cultural Resources***

#### **General Cultural Resources Management**

**CR-1:** Prioritize inventories to identify sites eligible to the National Register.

**CR-2:** Allocate all cultural resources in the planning area, whether already recorded or projected to occur on the basis of existing data synthesis (including cultural landscapes), or not projected to occur but later identified through inventory, to the following six uses according to their nature and relative preservation value: Scientific Use, Conservation for Future Use, Traditional Use, Public Use, Experimental Use, and Discharged from Management. See the Cultural category in the glossary for definitions. These use allocations pertain to cultural resources, not to areas of land. Each resource will be assigned to a primary use category, but that assignment does not preclude management from other use categories. Allocate and manage all sites determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places to Scientific, Public, and Conservation for Future Use.

Focus on three of the six cultural resource use allocations: Scientific Use, Public Use, and Conservation for Future Use. These allocations currently address the majority of issues within the planning area and, therefore, are of high importance.

Do not emphasize the remaining three cultural resource use allocations – Traditional Use, Experimental Use, and Discharged from Management – for the following reasons:

- Traditional Use. Several recent and extensive efforts have identified no Traditional Cultural Properties within the planning area. Appropriate measures for identification and evaluation of Traditional Cultural Properties, as well as assignment to use categories, will be taken during tribal consultation and public involvement in planning and project implementation. Although currently not identified as such, several historic cemeteries may qualify as Traditional Cultural Properties.
- Experimental Use. Because there are few activities in the planning area where the destructive nature of impacts on archaeological sites are uncertain or unknown, this allocation will not be emphasized.

- Discharged from Management. This cultural resource use allocation may occur. However, this will not be emphasized because conducting a program driven by this goal would defeat the long-term preservation of these resources.

**CR-3:** Allocate and manage all sites determined not eligible to the National Register of Historic Places and not containing archaeological resources as Discharged from Management Use.

**CR-4:** Pending completion of watershed, site type, or site-specific Cultural Resource Project Plans, direct inventory priorities to testing high-medium-low predictions found in archaeological predictive models, including the Gnomon forecast model (Gnomon 2004).

**CR-5:** Continue to educate the public on Cultural Heritage resources, their importance as a non-renewable resource, and the laws that provide for their preservation. Work with local groups and volunteers to enhance interpretive capabilities and provide educational opportunities.

**CR-6:** The following thirteen classes of site types found in the planning area have specific management needs based on each site type. Priorities for inventory and appropriate management actions have been identified for each site type.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocation: Historic Roads, Trails, Railways, Highways, and Associated Sidings and Stations**

- Management:
  - Perform an intensive archaeological inventory of the corridor of each site to establish baseline information on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resources Project Plans.
  - Write an historic context report for each resource on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Inventory road/trail/railway/highway related sites (e.g., stage stops, stage stations) and record the condition on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resources Project Plans.
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design (which conserves samples for future use).
- Conservation for Future Use:
  - Post informational signs at all major intersections along existing Public Use sites.
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design (which conserves samples for future use).
  - Inventory road/trail/railway/highway related sites (e.g., stage stops, stage stations) and record the condition.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Public Use:
  - Post informational signs at all major intersections along Public Use sites as appropriate.
  - Prepare activity level cultural resource project plans for public use sites to identify interpretive needs including signs, interpretive kiosks, driving guides, etc.
  - Complete National Register nominations for all Public Use sites on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated National Scenic and Historic Trails
  - Routes under national study

Manage the cultural historic landscape (setting) around the Pony Express Trail and California Trail (National Historic Trail) according to the National Historic Preservation Act and current policy regarding Historic Landscape Management along National Historic Trails and current policy regarding the Determination of the Direct Effects Analysis Area for National Historic Trails. The area of direct effect around national historic trails is established as 1 mile from centerline, although in some cases, the area of effect may be larger or smaller than 1 mile from centerline. Manage designated national historic trails according to the National Scenic and Historic Trail Act (16 United States Code sections 1241-1251) and the BLM's National Scenic and Historic Trails Strategy and Work Plan (BLM 2006).

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible historic roads, trails, railways, highways, and associated sidings and stations for Scientific, Conservation, and Public Use. No fee sites will be established.

Allocate national historic trails to Public Use and prepare Cultural Resource Project Plans to better balance Public, Scientific, and Conservation Use. Establish fee sites at Public Use sites as appropriate.

### **Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocation: Rock Art Sites**

- Management:
  - Consider for allocation to Public Use, any rock art site with evidence of public use.
  - Allocate any rock art site with no evidence of public use to Conservation Use and/or Scientific Use and consider those sites for public use as appropriate.
  - Preserve in place all rock art sites eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion c. Do not discharge these sites from management.
  - Use the best and most accurate technologies available to photograph and gather locational information at all rock art panels (for example, digital photographs and global positioning system readings with position error no greater than 20 feet).
  - Take detailed measured drawings and sub-meter global positioning system locations of all panels.
  - Allow Scientific Use subject to management plans that minimize physical damage to rock art.
  - Conduct condition monitoring of rock art sites on at-risk/threatened rock art sites annually.
  - Limit livestock and human contact with rock art panels through physical barriers (fences or natural barriers such as plantings or boulder placement).



- Allow emergency stabilization if natural or cultural threats are causing loss of integrity to rock art.
- Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
- Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Permit surface collection of artifacts on non-rock art portions of sites under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 if there is threat of loss or destruction.
- Public Use:
  - Post informational signs on rock site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 at all Public Use sites.
  - Develop site-specific recreation management plans/interpretative plans for all Public Use rock art sites before implementing Cultural Resource Project Plan actions.
  - Consider installing at least one interpretative trail/footpath at each rock art site allocated to Public Use.
  - Install visitor registers at all Public Use sites.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Those areas containing rock art identified for prescribed or wildland fire use
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible rock art sites for Scientific, Conservation, and/or Public Use, and continue to develop interpretative sites with priority placed on maintaining and improving existing interpretative facilities.

Establish fee sites at Public Use rock art sites as appropriate. American Indians will be exempt from fees only when visiting rock art sites for religious practices.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Historic Townsites, Historic Mining Camps, Historic Mining Districts and Related Historic Buildings and Standing Structures, and Historic Racetracks**

- Management:
  - Stabilize or rehabilitate standing structures on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resources Project Plans and consistent with the Memorandum of Agreement with the Nevada Division of Minerals for Mine Safety Closures (State Protocol Agreement, page 38, Appendix F, Part B: Hazard Abatement).
  - Write an historic context report and an historic structure report for each mining district based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Complete an intensive archaeological inventory of the resource (townsite, camp, or district) for baseline information based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Follow Appendix H of the State Protocol Agreement for recording all standing structures for baseline information based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Scientific Use:
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design (which conserves samples for future use).
  - Post signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 as appropriate.
  - Permit surface collection of artifacts under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 if there is threat of loss or destruction.
  - Permit data recovery in those instances where future protection is not feasible.
- Conservation for Future Use:
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design (which conserves samples for future use).
  - Post signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 as appropriate.
  - Perform stabilization and/or rehabilitation of standing structures on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
- Public Use:
  - Place at least one kiosk with interpretation panel for each resource.
  - Develop site-specific information brochures for all Public Use sites.
  - Complete National Register nominations for all Public Use sites based on priorities developed in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Consider preservation and reuse of historic buildings as appropriate.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Those areas containing historic townsites, mining camps, mining districts, buildings, standing structures and historic racetracks identified for prescribed or wildland fire use
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible sites with evidence of unauthorized excavation for Conservation Use and/or Scientific Use in order to perform data recovery in those instances where future protection is not feasible. Allocate and manage the remaining National Register eligible sites for Scientific and/or Public Use.

Allocate and manage all of the National Register eligible sites with standing structures for Conservation and/or Public Use.

Establish fee sites at Public Use sites as appropriate.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Historic Cemeteries and Isolated Historic Gravesites**

- Management:
  - Allow preservation in place and emergency stabilization if natural or cultural threats are causing loss of integrity to cemetery (including wood treatment and stone repair).
  - Write historic context report and equivalent of historic structure report for all cemeteries based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Follow Appendix H of the State Protocol Agreement for recording all standing structures for baseline information based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Follow Appendix H of the State Protocol Agreement based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Install visitor registers and create informational brochures.
  - Install fences or physical barriers.
  - Install physical protection of historic cemeteries and isolated gravesites in the Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
  - If established, allocate and manage for Traditional Use.
- Scientific Use:
  - No scientific excavation of cemeteries except in those instances where physical disturbance is unavoidable and scientific study of human remains and associated funerary objects, and/or burial patterns, may be appropriate to answer questions about demography, health, and/or status, as well as site significance.
- Public Use:
  - Prepare National Register nominations, with the expectation that historic cemeteries and isolated gravesites that are no longer in use and part of historic townsites, landscapes, or themes, will meet National Register criteria.
- Discharged from Management:
  - Discharge from Management under the Act of June 14, 1926, commonly known as the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, to a public (government) body requesting transfer with conditions/stipulations that maintain historic character.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Those areas containing historic cemeteries or isolated gravesites identified for prescribed or wildland fire use
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all sites for Conservation and/or Public Use.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

Establish fee sites at Public Use sites as appropriate.

### **Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Ethnic Arboreal Narratives and Graphics, and Bow Stave Trees**

- Management:
  - Perform detailed recordation of all arboreal narratives, graphics, and bow stave trees on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans. Recordation will include, for example, detailed measured drawings, digital photographs, and sub-meter global positioning system locational information.
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Develop management plans and National Register nomination addressing collection/curation policy for specimens.
  - Perform a reconnaissance inventory of all threatened aspen stands based on priorities identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 as appropriate.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resources Project Plans
  - Those areas containing aspen stands identified for prescribed or wildland fire use
  - Oldest aspen groves with known carvings
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible sites for Scientific Use while promoting public access.

### **Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Paleoindian Sites**

The term Paleoindian is defined as follows: “Paleoindian or Pre-Archaic has been attributed to include both fluted and stemmed complexes as well as being reserved for complexes containing fluted points and extinct megafauna. The term Paleoindian is used here to denote archeological sites and artifact assemblages dating between 12,000 to 8,000 years Before Present, which include fluted or stemmed points, and possibly crescents. Under this broad Paleoindian umbrella there are several local traditions and possible variants that may represent different peoples using the land in different ways. This includes Clovis, Folsom, Western Pluvial Lakes Tradition, and Stemmed Complex” (Sherve 2001).

- Management:
  - Due to fragility of these sites to unauthorized collection, do not allocate these sites to public use, unless disclosure of site location does not harm but benefit the resource.
  - Complete National Register nominations for all sites on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Develop partnerships to encourage scientific research on Paleoindian sites in the planning area.

- Address research and preservation potential in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
- Perform site recordation to include, for example, collection of sub-meter global positioning system locational information of all diagnostic Paleoindian tools when located.
- Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design to conserve samples for future use.
- Conservation Use:
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 where evidence of unauthorized collection is evident.
  - Conduct annual monitoring of all Paleoindian sites on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Allow activities that do not have direct impacts to the integrity of the sites.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible sites for Scientific and/or Conservation Use.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Formative Puebloan Sites**

- Management:
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Allow preservation in place and emergency stabilization if natural or cultural threats are causing loss of integrity to sites.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.
  - Develop partnerships to encourage scientific research on formative Puebloan sites.
  - Conduct annual monitoring of all formative Puebloan sites based on priorities developed in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Allocate no more than one site per watershed to Public Use.
  - Address Scientific, Conservation, and Public Use, as well as public participation in research on formative Puebloan sites in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Protect formative Puebloan sites from vehicular traffic in the event of fire on or near the sites.
- Scientific Use:
  - Allow excavation/scientific research subject to management plan with appropriate research design (which maximizes conservation of the site for future use and also maximizes public participation in the research).
- Conservation for Future Use:
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 only where public knowledge is inevitable.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Public Use:
  - Install visitor registers and create informational brochures based on priorities established in Cultural Resource Project plans.
  - Develop specific recreation management plan/interpretative plans for all formative Puebloan sites developed for Public Use.
  - Perform surface collection of artifacts on all sites allocated to Public Use prior to Public Use designation.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible sites for Scientific, Conservation Use, and Public Use.

Establish fee sites at Public Use sites as appropriate.

### **Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Rockshelter and Cave Sites**

- Management:
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Preserve in place and allow emergency stabilization if natural or cultural threats are causing loss of integrity to sites.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 where evidence of ongoing public use exists.
  - Conduct a Class II inventory of areas identified as high potential for aboriginal site occurrence on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Encourage partnerships that assist the Ely District Office in evaluating loss of scientific data due to vandalism and in estimating cost of restoration and repair.
  - Develop partnerships for excavation/scientific research to assist the Ely District Office to understand the paleo-environmental record.
- Conservation for Future Use:
  - Evaluate the cost of restoration and repair as soon as vandalism is detected.
- Public Use:
  - Install visitor registers and create informational brochures based on priorities established in Cultural Resource Project plans.
  - Develop specific recreation management plan/interpretative plan for all rockshelter cave sites developed for Public Use.
  - Perform surface collection of artifacts on all sites allocated to Public Use prior to Public Use designation.

- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Those areas containing rockshelters identified for prescribed or wildland fire use
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible sites for Scientific, Conservation Use, and Public Use.

Establish fee sites at Public Use sites as appropriate.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Prehistoric Complex Sites, Campsites, or Specialized Activity Areas**

- Management:
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, where evidence of public use exists.
  - Develop Cultural Resource Project Plans that further define this class of sites and clarify acceptable management actions.
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design (which conserves samples for future use).
  - Subject all sites initially allocated to Conservation, Scientific, Experimental, or Discharged from Management Use to site-specific activity plans that preserve portions of the sites for future use.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Complete National Register nominations for all sites allocated to Scientific Use on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
- Public Use:
  - Continue to produce materials and programs on “Leave What You Find” principles and environmental ethics.
  - Develop and produce a brochure covering the topic “What Do You Do If You Find an Artifact?”.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage 90 percent of the National Register eligible sites for Conservation and/or Scientific Use and up to 10 percent of the sites per watershed for Experimental Use.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Toolstone Sources or Quarries**

- Management:
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, where evidence of public use exists.
- Develop Cultural Resource Project Plans that include addressing mineral collection of non-artifacts from quarry/source locations.
- Implement photographic monitoring for all obsidian sources.
- Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Compile National Register nominations for all sites allocated to Scientific Use on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
- Public Use:
  - Develop and produce a brochure to enable the public to distinguish between artifacts and mineral specimens.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all obsidian toolstone sources/quarries for Scientific and/or Conservation Use; 90 percent of all other National Register eligible material sources/quarries for Scientific and/or Conservation Use; and up to 10 percent of all other National Register eligible material sources/quarries for Experimental Use.

### **Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Historic Ranching and Livestock-related Historic Sites, Buildings, Standing Structures, and Landscapes**

- Management:
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 where evidence of public use exists.
  - Write historic context reports on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Write historic structure reports on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Complete Level I documentation (measured drawings, plans, elevations, photos, and narratives) on all standing structures on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Obtain photo documentation of historic features and landscapes.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Scientific Use:
  - Allow excavation subject to management plan with appropriate research design (that conserves samples for future use).
- Conservation Use:
  - Emphasize conservation of the setting.
  - Perform stabilization and/or rehabilitation of standing structures on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.



- Discharged from Management:
  - Subsequent to scientific use, discharge sites when preservation in place is impractical.
- Public Use:
  - Complete National Register nominations for all Public Use sites on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Consider standing structures for adaptive uses.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Manage and allocate sites for Public Use on a watershed basis. Allocate and manage all of the National Register eligible sites for Scientific Use and/or Public Use.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: Ethnohistoric Sites, Sacred Sites, Traditional Use Areas, Traditional Cultural Properties**

- Management:
  - When identified, describe locations and boundaries of Ethnohistoric Sites, Sacred Sites, Traditional Use Areas, and Traditional Cultural Properties with global positioning systems or other appropriate technology.
  - When identified, record Ethnohistoric Sites, Sacred Sites, Traditional Use Areas, and Traditional Cultural Properties.
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Complete National Register nominations on a priority basis as identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans.
  - Pending approval of Cultural Resource Project Plans, allocate all sites to Conservation use.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible Ethnohistoric Sites primarily for Conservation Use unless subject to Cultural Resource Project Plans.

Allocate and manage all identified Traditional Cultural Properties primarily for Traditional Use.

Allocate and manage all identified Sacred Sites or Traditional Use Areas for Conservation Use.

**Parameter – Cultural Resource Use Allocations: “Other” Sites**

“Other” is defined as those sites not included in any of the above 12 site types.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Management:
  - Evaluate fire potential and remove fuels where there is threat of loss.
  - Post appropriate signs with information on site etiquette and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, where evidence of public use exists.
  - Encourage the use of site stewards for monitoring.
- Public Use:
  - Due to sensitivity of some of these resources, monitor public use on these sites (excluding the agave roasting pits).
- Priorities for Inventory:
  - Potential threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
  - Existing designated sites

Allocate and manage all National Register eligible sites for Scientific and/or Conservation Use with public use being monitored. Permit Scientific Use if it does not destroy features.

Allocate all of the agave roasting pits to Scientific, Conservation, and/or Public Use.

### ***Monitoring – Cultural Resources***

Monitoring of cultural resource sites within the planning area will continue, with assistance from the Nevada Heritage Site Stewardship Program and/or other volunteer groups. Identified sites will be monitored to determine condition, impacts, deterioration, and use of such sites. The condition of the sites and other data collected will be entered into the cultural resources database. If a site is listed on or is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places, consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office will be conducted, when necessary, to determine the appropriate action to stop the deterioration of the site or to assist with mitigation. The effectiveness of presentations to the public, educational brochures, interpretative materials, informational materials and displays, scientific research collections and materials, and the site steward program also will be monitored. In addition to monitoring specific sites, the effectiveness of archaeological predictive models developed to assist the Ely District Office in predicting site locations and densities will be monitored. The predictive models will be updated as information on cultural resource sites within the planning area is obtained prior to BLM management actions and issuing approvals for non-BLM actions.

## **Paleontological Resources**

The BLM has authority to manage and protect paleontological resources under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and various sections of Part 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

### ***Goals – Paleontological Resources***

Identify and manage at-risk paleontological resources (scientific value); preserve and protect vertebrate fossils through best science methods; and promote public and scientific use of invertebrate and paleobotanical fossils.

***Objectives – Paleontological Resources***

To manage fossil sites with high scientific value in a stable condition, while allowing appropriate research and casual public collecting.

***Management Actions – Paleontological Resources***

**General Paleontological Resource Management**

**PAL-1:** Allocate and manage all vertebrate sites for Scientific Use.

**PAL-2:** Allocate and manage all invertebrate and paleobotanical sites for Public and/or Scientific Use.

**PAL-3:** Change the use allocation without a plan amendment if another use is evident or proposed.

**Parameter – Trilobite Collecting**

**PAL-4:** Establish a no-fee-based registration system.

**PAL-5:** Establish the following priorities for Inventory:

- Predicted threats identified in Cultural Resource Project Plans
- Existing designated sites
- Lands identified for disposal

***Monitoring – Paleontological Resources***

Paleontological resource sites will be monitored to determine if site conditions are stable and to assist in management actions to mitigate deteriorating conditions.

**Visual Resources**

Section 102(8) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act declares that public land will be managed to protect the quality of scenic values and, where appropriate, to preserve and protect certain public land in its natural condition. NEPA, section 101(b), requires federal agencies to “. . . assure for all Americans . . . esthetically pleasing surroundings.” Section 102 of NEPA requires agencies to “. . . utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will ensure the integrated use of . . . Environmental Design Acts in the planning and decision making . . .” process. Guidelines for the identification of visual resource management classes on public land are contained in BLM Manual Handbook 8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory. New technology in the form of geographic information systems, as well as changing public perceptions about visual resources led to the development of a new inventory for the planning area.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

### ***Goals – Visual Resources***

Manage public land actions and activities in a manner consistent with Ely District Office visual resource management class objectives.

### ***Objectives – Visual Resources***

To implement multiple use activities within the planning area with mitigation measures consistent with the visual resource management classes.

### ***Management Actions – Visual Resources***

**VR-1:** Manage designated wilderness, wilderness study areas, and some special designation areas such as ACECs (see the discussion on Special Designations) for scenic qualities under Visual Resource Management Class I objectives.

**VR-2:** Manage wilderness study areas released by Congress at the baseline visual resource inventory class.

**VR-3:** Manage visual resources in accordance with the following visual resource management classes (approximate acreages – see **Map 10**).

Class I: 1,138,730 acres

Class II: 1,966,212 acres

Class III: 5,205,134 acres

Class IV: 3,146,526 acres

**VR-4:** Manage the Pony Express National Historic Trail corridor under Visual Resource Management Class II objectives.

### ***Monitoring – Visual Resources***

Monitoring will be conducted for all projects (including, but not limited to projects associated with any developments, land alterations, vegetation manipulation, etc.) that could potentially affect visual resources. These projects will be monitored to ensure compliance with established visual resource management classes. Monitoring will include the use of the visual contrast rating system, described in BLM Manual 8400 (BLM 1984).

## **Lands and Realty**

Section 102(a)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act requires that public land be retained in federal ownership unless disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national interest. Acquisition of land to consolidate ownership patterns will provide for more efficient land management and administration for both

public and private landowners. Retention and acquisition of land containing significant resource values will provide for long-term protection and management of those values.

Rights-of-way and other land uses are recognized as major uses of the public lands and are authorized pursuant to sections 302 and 501 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. Section 503 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act provides for the designation of utility corridors and encourages utilization of rights-of-way in-common to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate rights-of-way. It is BLM policy to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors. Only facilities and uses that are consistent with the special designation associated with that area will be permitted in avoidance areas. Designation of exclusion zones—those areas where no new rights-of-way will be allowed—will provide protection of lands and resources with values that are not compatible with rights-of-way or other land uses.

The acquisition of legal public and administrative access is required to ensure continued effective administration and public use of these lands. This need becomes more acute as public use of these lands increases and as landowners become more aware of the value of public and private land for recreation and other purposes. Land tenure adjustment actions (exchanges or fee purchases) can be a valuable tool for access acquisitions. However, without careful review, lands actions, particularly disposals, can result in lost access.

Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act gives the Secretary of the Interior the authority to make, modify, extend, or revoke withdrawals and mandates periodic review of existing withdrawals.

### ***Goals – Lands and Realty***

Manage public lands in a manner that:

- Allows the retention of public land with high resource values;
- Consolidates public land patterns to ensure effective administration and improve resource management;
- Makes public lands that promote community development available for disposal;
- Meets public, local, state, and federal agency needs for use authorizations such as rights-of-way, permits, leases, and easements while avoiding or minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values; and
- Utilizes withdrawal actions with the least restrictive measures and minimum size necessary to accomplish the desired purpose.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

### ***Objectives – Lands and Realty***

To respond to public, local, state, and federal agency needs for land for community development, utility and other associated rights-of-way, communication sites, and other allowed uses of BLM-administered lands.

### ***Management Actions – Lands and Realty***

#### **Parameter – Retention**

**LR-1:** Retain lands or interest in lands within designated critical habitat for federally listed threatened and endangered species unless the disposal results in the acquisition of land with higher quality habitat.

**LR-2:** Retain lands within ACECs.

**LR-3:** Under authority of the Federal Land Policy Management Act, Section 203, retain portions of the National Trails System including the corridors of both the Pony Express National Historic Trail and the California National Historic Trail within the designated corridor. This limitation is without regard for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places and is instead tied to the congressionally-designated corridor.

**LR-4:** Prior to disposal, review all lands for National Natural Landmark eligibility and retain lands containing resources qualifying as National Natural Landmarks.

**LR-5:** Retain all public lands with springs and creeks that contain fisheries in federal ownership unless the disposal of these lands will result in the acquisition of lands with higher quality habitat.

**LR-6:** Retain lands in areas with high recreation value, unless state and county entities show an over-riding need through an acceptable recreation management plan.

#### **Parameter – Disposal (Sales, Exchanges, Recreation and Public Purposes Act, and Airport Conveyances)**

**LR-7:** In accordance with Section 7 of the Taylor Grazing Act, 43 U.S.C. 315f, and Executive Order No. 6910, the described lands are hereby classified for disposal by sale, exchange, Recreation and Public Purposes Act, and airport conveyances.

**LR-8:** In accordance with the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004, the Ely District Office will dispose of not more than 90,000 acres of public land in Lincoln County identified for disposal by the Ely District Office through the Ely Resource Management Plan or a subsequent amendment to the land use plan. The Ely District Office and the County jointly will select the parcels of land to offer for sale. The lands identified in the approved plan upon signature of the Record of Decision will be withdrawn from:

- All forms of entry and appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws;

- Location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and
- Operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws.

Once the lands are disposed of by a sale or an election by the County to obtain land under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, the withdrawal will no longer apply.

**LR-9:** In accordance with the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004, up to 15,000 acres of public land in Lincoln County could be conveyed to Lincoln County for open space and parks.

**LR-10:** In accordance with the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004, approximately 4,780 acres of public land in Lincoln County could be conveyed to the State of Nevada for state park expansion.

**LR-11:** In accordance with the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006, the Ely District Office will dispose of not more than 45,000 acres of public land in White Pine County identified for disposal by the Ely District Office through the Ely Resource Management Plan or a subsequent amendment to the land use plan. The Ely District Office and the County will jointly select the parcels of land to offer for sale. The lands identified in the approved plan upon signature of the Record of Decision will be withdrawn from:

- All forms of entry and appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws;
- Location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and
- Operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws.

Once the lands are disposed of by a sale or an election by the County to obtain land under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, the withdrawal will no longer apply.

**LR-12:** In accordance with the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006, the following lands will be conveyed to the State of Nevada, subject to valid existing rights, for no consideration, all right, title, and interest if the state and White Pine County enter into a written agreement supporting the conveyances.

- Approximately 6,265 acres identified as “Steptoe Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion Proposal”; and
- Approximately 658 acres identified as “Ward Charcoal Ovens Expansion.”

**LR-13:** In accordance with the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act of 2006, the following lands will be conveyed to White Pine County, subject to valid existing rights, for no consideration, all right, title, and interest:

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Approximately 1,550 acres identified as “Airport Expansion”; and
- Approximately 200 acres identified as “Industrial Park Expansion.”

**LR-14:** The U.S. mineral estate inside or outside the designated disposal areas may be conveyed to consolidate surface and sub-surface management ownership, if there is no known mineral value present, or if the reservation of mineral rights by the U.S. is interfering with or precluding appropriate non-mineral development that is considered to be a more beneficial use of the land. Conveyance of mineral interest shall be made only to the owner of record of the surface, upon payment of administrative costs and the fair market value of the interests being conveyed.

**LR-15:** Subject all Land Tenure adjustments to valid existing rights at the time of disposal.

**LR-16:** Dispose of lands outside of designated disposal areas to resolve unauthorized use of public land only when there are no other practical means of resolution.

**LR-17:** Maintain access to recreation areas.

**LR-18: Exchanges.** Consider land exchanges that serve the national interest and are beneficial to Ely District Office programs or that support the programs of other agencies, per Sections 102, 205, and 206 of Federal Land Policy Management Act.

**LR-19: Recreation and Public Purposes Act.** Convey or lease public lands only for an established or definitely proposed project for which there is a reasonable timetable of development and satisfactory development and management plans. Convey no more land than is reasonably necessary for the proposed use.

**LR-20:** A total of 75,758 acres are available for potential disposal: 57,039 acres in Lincoln County; 0 acres in Nye County; and 18,719 acres in White Pine County. See **Map 11**. (See Appendix B.) Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Sections 203 and 209, states that sales are the preferred method of disposal.

**LR-21:** If rights-of-way are approved for power plants, dispose of up to 4,500 acres in White Pine County by direct sale.

**LR-22:** Dispose of 40 acres located at Township 6 South, Range 57 East, Section 25, NW¼ NW¼ by direct sale to resolve a long standing agricultural lease that has several structures on it.

**LR-23:** If a right-of-way is approved for a power plant, dispose of up to 640 acres in Lincoln County by direct sale.

**LR-24:** Use the following criteria for disposal. These criteria may be modified as appropriate in the future.



- Allow land disposal of parcels containing National Register eligible sites when mitigation and/or data recovery has occurred prior to patent.
- Allow disposal of lands that are difficult to manage and are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency.
- Allow disposal of lands when disposal will serve important public objectives, including but not limited to community expansion or economic development; disposal could not be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public lands; and disposal outweighs other public objectives or values.
- Process existing Desert Land Entry, Carey Act, and Indian Allotment applications. If the application is cancelled, relinquished, or rejected, the lands could not be applied for again. Reject applications for Desert Land Entries, Carey Act, or Indian Allotments in designated disposal areas if they are located within a closed water basin unless existing water rights are held.
- Allow land disposals within herd management areas when the disposal 1) will not prohibit free roaming behavior within or between areas inside the herd management area, 2) will not eliminate so much habitat within the herd management area that a significant reduction of the appropriate management levels will result, and 3) will be subject to mitigation.
- Dispose of lands only in identified areas (see Appendix B). Exceptions will be Recreation and Public Purposes Act, Airport Conveyances, existing Desert Land Entries, Carey Act and Indian Allotments, and disposals to resolve trespasses.
- The Ely District Office will provide public notice prior to disposal of public land under military operations areas acknowledging the risks associated with the development of the land and the possible restrictions to uses that would be compatible with the military operations areas.

**LR-25:** The BLM will work cooperatively with tribes when specific expansion proposals are provided to BLM in the future. They will be reviewed and processed according to appropriate BLM policy related to the expansion of tribal lands.

**Parameter – Acquisitions**

**LR-26:** Limit acquisition of lands to situations where no other reasonable alternative exists. Coordinate on acquisitions with federal, state, and county agencies, and other interested parties prior to the acquisition. Consider private lands or rights for acquisition from willing sellers.

- Consider acquisition of lands or interest in lands with at-risk or high resource values or those characteristics that contribute to restoration, healthy watersheds, or other resource goals (e.g., ACECs, wilderness study areas, habitat for threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, and designated wilderness) in the planning area, or those lands that also provide for environmentally responsible commercial activities.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Consider split-estate where appropriate to improve resource management while protecting resource values.

**LR-27:** Acquire legal public or administrative access from willing landowners, where a public demand or administrative need exists.

**LR-28:** Manage newly acquired lands in the same manner as comparable surrounding public lands or in conformance with established guidelines for the special management area.

**LR-29:** Prior to the acquisition of non-federal lands, conduct assessments (e.g., noxious weed) to enable the authorized officer to factor the cost of weed control into the acquisition decision.

### **Parameter – Withdrawals**

**LR-30:** Implement proposed withdrawals, if appropriate, consisting of the BLM Caliente Administrative Site (2 acres), Murry Springs Watershed (the municipal water supply for the City of Ely) (1,260 acres), and the entrance area from Baker to Great Basin National Park (6,720 acres).

**LR-31:** Recommend withdrawal of lands with sensitive or high resource values (e.g., ACECs) from surface and mineral entry (see the discussion on Geology and Mineral Extraction).

**LR-32:** Consider requests by other federal agencies for new withdrawals, withdrawal relinquishments, and modifications on a case-by-case basis.

**LR-33:** Withdraw the 80-acre area around Ash Springs (Township 5 North, Range 61 East, Section 31, SW $\frac{1}{4}$  SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , and Township 6 North, Range 61 East, Section 6, Lot 8, Mount Diablo Meridian) from settlement, sale, location, or entry (with the exception of a no surface occupancy stipulation for fluid mineral leasing).

### **Parameter – Corridors**

**LR-34:** Manage corridors in the RMP planning area as follows (see **Map 12**):

- A. Retain a 1,000-foot wide corridor centered on existing telephone fiber optic lines, from within Township 11 South, Range 71 East, Section 30 in an easterly direction to the Arizona state line.
- B. Retain the 0.5 mile wide east-west Falcon to Gonder corridor interconnecting with the Ely-to-Utah State Line portion of the Southwest Intertie Project corridor.
- C. Retain the Ely to Utah State Line portion of the Southwest Intertie Project corridor at 0.5 mile wide.

- D. Designate the approved Southwest Intertie Project corridor at 0.75 mile wide from the Elko/White Pine County line to the point where it parallels Highway 93 and the Pahrangat Wildlife Refuge, and at 0.5 mile wide from that point to the Clark County line.
- E. Maintain the Moapa corridor at 0.5 mile wide.
- F. Maintain the corridors designated by the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act at 0.5 mile wide.
- G. Designate a new, 0.5-mile-wide corridor, beginning near the Atlanta Mine where the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act corridor ends; following a northerly direction along the west side of Spring Valley; and ending at the Southwest Intertie Project corridor.

**Parameter – Communication Sites**

**LR-35:** Authorize communication site locations that support community and economic development with an emphasis on co-location of sites.

**LR-36:** Establish wilderness study areas as avoidance areas.

**LR-37:** Establish designated wilderness as exclusion areas.

**LR-38:** Establish ACECs as avoidance or exclusion areas.

**LR-39:** Coordinate, as appropriate, with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies on siting and construction for all communication towers.

**Parameter – Land Use Authorizations (Rights-of-Way, Permits, Leases, Easements, and Unauthorized Use)**

**LR-40:** Establish wilderness study areas as avoidance areas.

**LR-41:** Establish designated wilderness as exclusion areas.

**LR-42:** Establish ACECs as avoidance or exclusion areas (see the discussion on Special Designations).

**LR-43:** Coordinate, as appropriate, with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies on siting and construction for rights-of-way proposals.

**LR-44:** Consider existing material site rights-of-way in ACECs (both developed and undeveloped) authorized under the provisions of the Federal Highway Aid Act as valid existing rights and consistent with the land use plan. Material site rights-of-way will be authorized within the 1-mile-wide corridor (0.5 mile on each side) on state and county roads and will be restricted to not less than 10-mile separations.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

**LR-45:** Manage rights-of-way in desert tortoise habitat the same as that described for the Beaver Dam Slope, Kane Springs, and Mormon Mesa ACECs (also see Appendix D).

**LR-46:** Reclaim surface disturbances from unauthorized uses to pre-disturbance conditions, if possible.

**LR-47:** Where feasible, consolidate new land use authorizations within or adjacent to existing authorizations.

**LR-48:** Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on utility line development and Avian Protection Plan guidelines.

**LR-49:** Implement the following management actions for desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7**). Implement the additional conditions for desert tortoise and conditions for the Southwest willow flycatcher, White River springfish, Pahrump poolfish, and Big Springs spinedace habitat contained in the 2008 Biological Opinion (Appendix D) (also refer to discussions on Special Status Species and Geology and Minerals).

- A speed limit of 25 miles per hour will be required for all vehicles on the project site and unposted dirt access roads.
- If possible, overnight parking and storage of equipment and materials, including stockpiling, will occur in previously disturbed areas or areas to be disturbed that have been cleared by a qualified tortoise biologist. If not possible, areas for overnight parking and storage of equipment will be designated by the BLM authorized officer based on recommendations of a qualified tortoise biologist.
- All vehicular traffic will be restricted to existing access roads, or those roads approved by the BLM authorized officer in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Project activity areas will be clearly marked or flagged at the outer boundaries before the onset of construction. All activities will be confined to designated areas. Blading of vegetation will occur only to the extent necessary and will be limited to areas designated for that purpose by the BLM authorized officer based on recommendations from a qualified tortoise biologist.
- Projects resulting in residual impacts will require the submission of a BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved reclamation plan, unless determined by the BLM authorized officer and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that reclamation or rehabilitation is not necessary. The reclamation/rehabilitation plan will describe objectives and methods to be used, species of plants and/or seed mixture to be used, time of planting, success standards, and follow-up monitoring. Depending upon the size and location of the project, reclamation could range from recontouring, to rehabilitation and restriction of access points, to intensive reclamation over the entire area of surface disturbance. The plan will be prepared within 60 days following completion of the surface disturbance phase of the project. Reclamation will be addressed on a case-by case basis.

- If trenches or holes are to remain open overnight, they will be checked for tortoises at the end and beginning of each workday. The trenches or holes also will be checked immediately prior to backfilling.
- The project applicant will notify the BLM's authorized officer at least ten days before initiation of any project. Notification will be made to the BLM's wildlife staff in Caliente or Ely.
- BLM's wildlife staff in Caliente or Ely and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southern Nevada District Office must be notified of any desert tortoise death or injury due to the project implementation by close of business on the following work day.
- All appropriate Nevada Department of Wildlife permits or letters of authorization will be acquired prior to handling desert tortoises and their parts, and prior to initiation of any activity that may require handling tortoises.
- The project proponent must submit a document to the BLM within 30 days of completion of the project, showing the number of acres disturbed; remuneration fees paid; and the number of tortoises taken, which includes capture and displacement, killed, injured, and harassed by other means, during project activities.

#### ***Monitoring – Lands and Realty***

The need for monitoring of rights-of-way and other land use authorizations will be assessed as proposals are evaluated through the NEPA process. Individual projects will be monitored to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the authorizing document and through the BLM accomplishment tracking process.

### **Renewable Energy**

The Ely District Office will follow established policy for the processing of right-of-way applications for potential renewable energy development projects on public lands administered by the BLM, and for evaluating the feasibility of installing energy systems on BLM administrative facilities and projects. Guidance also will be obtained from the BLM Wind Energy Development Programmatic EIS. (Note: Geothermal energy is discussed with Geology and Mineral Extraction.)

#### ***Goals – Renewable Energy***

Provide opportunities for development of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, biomass, and other alternative energy sources while minimizing adverse impacts to other resources.

#### ***Objectives – Renewable Energy***

To be responsive to applications for renewable energy sites and associated rights-of-way, as encouraged by current BLM policy.

### ***Management Actions – Renewable Energy***

**RE-1:** Review proposed renewable energy developments on a project-specific basis, considering potential resource conflicts and mitigation measures. Areas of high potential for wind and solar energy development are identified but no specific areas are designated for such development (see **Maps 13** and **14**).

**RE-2:** Conform wind energy development to the direction presented in Appendix A, Section 3 – BLM Wind Energy Development Program Policies and Best Management Practices.

**RE-3:** Wind energy developers should conduct pre-application consultation with the Ely District Office, the appropriate Department of Defense representatives, and the Department of Homeland Security, to determine possible constraints posed by military testing and training operations.

**RE-4:** Establish wilderness study areas as avoidance areas.

**RE-5:** Establish designated wilderness as exclusion areas.

**RE-6:** Establish ACECs as avoidance or exclusion areas (see the discussion on Special Designations).

**RE-7:** Increase the utilization of biomass from BLM lands and utilize tools of the Healthy Forest initiative such as Stewardship Contracting. Review proposed biomass energy development on a project-specific basis in relation to specific areas of restoration needed to restore healthy vegetation communities.

### ***Monitoring – Renewable Energy***

Monitoring for renewable energy projects will depend on site characteristics and the type of project being proposed (e.g., wind, solar, biomass). For example, local differences in wildlife populations and movement patterns, habitats present, area topography, weather, and facility design result in each proposed renewable energy development project being unique and requiring a detailed individual evaluation plan. Data on wildlife use and mortality at one wind energy facility are not necessarily applicable to others. Monitoring protocols will be developed for the unique assemblage of resources that could be affected and in accordance with the BLM policies that are in place at the time each individual project is proposed.

## **Travel Management**

Federal regulations (Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subpart 8340) and BLM planning guidance require the Ely District Office to designate all BLM-administered land as either open, limited, or closed in regard to off-road vehicle (now termed off-highway vehicle) use. These designations are designed to help meet public demand for off-highway vehicle activities, protect natural resources, ensure public safety, and minimize conflicts among users.

The BLM designates areas as “open” for cross country vehicle use where there are no compelling resource protection needs, user conflicts, or public safety issues to warrant limiting cross-country travel.

The BLM designates areas as “limited” where it must restrict off-highway vehicle use to meet specific resource management objectives. These limitations may include: restricting the number or types of vehicles; limiting the time or season of use; allowing permitted or licensed use only; limiting use to existing roads and trails; and limiting use to designated roads and trails. The BLM may enact other limitations, as necessary to protect resources, particularly in areas of intense motorized off-highway vehicle use.

The BLM designates areas as “closed” if closure to all vehicular use is necessary to protect resources, ensure visitor safety, or reduce use conflicts.

### ***Goals – Travel Management***

Provide and maintain suitable access to public lands. Manage off-highway vehicle use to protect resource values, promote public safety, provide off-highway vehicle opportunities where appropriate, and minimize conflict.

Work closely with local, state, tribal, and other affected parties and other resource users to address off-highway vehicle management including land use and route designations, and monitoring and adaptive management strategies such as applying the Limits of Acceptable Change process.

### ***Objectives – Travel Management***

To manage motorized vehicle traffic to sustain this type of use while protecting sensitive resources and providing access.

Comprehensive travel and transportation planning is the BLM’s interdisciplinary approach to addressing multiple-use access concerns. Comprehensive travel management planning addresses all resource use aspects and accompanying modes and conditions of travel on public lands, and is not limited to recreational off-highway vehicle activities. Providing and maintaining access to the public lands is an important public service provided by the BLM. The National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands (BLM 2001) provides guidance in developing and implementing solutions to off-highway vehicle issues. Roads on BLM-administered lands are used by permitted users such as miners and livestock operators and by recreationists for dispersed recreation activities such as hunting, fishing, camping, rock-hounding, off-highway vehicle use, and sightseeing. Access is necessary for BLM personnel to administer the various resource management programs on public land including livestock grazing, mining, wildlife habitat management, watershed management, recreation management, and numerous other programs. Access also is an important factor in fire suppression and fire management.

Complexity, incomplete data, and insufficient resources have made it infeasible to complete road and trail network selection and data collection for this planning effort. Collection will follow a standardized process using appropriate technology to allow staff to record road and trail conditions and characteristics.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

Travel Management in the planning area will be:

- **Comprehensive:** All motorized and non-motorized travel that occurs on public lands will be considered.
- **Multi-functional:** Participation will encompass all functions within the BLM.
- **Collaborative:** Travel plans will be accomplished in a collaborative and community-based process.
- **Outcome based:** Travel systems will be designed for transportation outcomes.
- **Holistic:** Travel management implementation will be accomplished in a holistic approach that provides clear direction for access and recreation opportunities while protecting sensitive areas. This includes signs, maps, education, maintenance, construction, reconstruction, planning, field presence, law enforcement, and monitoring.

### ***Management Actions – Travel Management***

#### **Parameter – Transportation Plan**

**TM-1:** Close designated wilderness to motorized and mechanized travel according to policy and enabling legislation.

**TM-2:** Close the Park Range, Blue Eagle, Antelope Range, and Riordan's Well wilderness study areas to motorized and mechanized travel.

**TM-3:** Incorporate the Duck Creek Basin designations into the transportation plan<sup>1</sup> (see **Map 15**).

**TM-4:** Update the Ely District Office Transportation Plan through subsequent implementation-level plans completed primarily along watershed boundaries. Transportation planning may move ahead of the watershed analysis process where the need for vehicle route designation is a greater priority than other watershed management needs. If this is the case, changes in route designations may be made once watershed analysis and additional site-specific NEPA is complete. Until site-specific implementation plans and route designations are complete, motorized travel will be limited to existing roads and trails except when cross-country travel is needed for safety, required for government (federal, state, and local) administrative needs, as authorized on a permit, for big game retrieval, or as otherwise officially approved.

The planning process is described as follows:

- Establish an interdisciplinary team to ensure broad participation from a variety of resources.
- Define the goals and objectives of the proposed Travel and Transportation Management Plan.

---

<sup>1</sup> Implementation level decision.



- From inventory data, complete a map of the proposed planning area, and identify the baseline of roads, primitive roads, and trails. As road and trail data collection is completed, the interdisciplinary review team will analyze each route and make recommendations for designations within the specific watershed based on the following criteria. (Other criteria will be added as new issues develop in different watersheds over time.) In addition to making recommendations on designations for existing routes, the review team may recommend the development of new roads or trails based on the same criteria.
  - Route redundancy
  - Wildlife habitat needs – integrate concepts of habitat connectivity into off-highway vehicle planning to minimize habitat fragmentation
  - Visual resource management class objectives
  - Recreation opportunities
  - Administrative needs
  - Public access needs
  - Special management areas
  - Cultural resources
  - Riparian and wetland resources
- Hold public scoping meetings. Notify the public of the meetings through local media, as appropriate, to reach the potentially affected public. Involve Resource Advisory Councils, local government, state and federal agencies, gateway communities, local motorized and non-motorized user group clubs as applicable to the planning area. Notify the meeting attendees of the objective of the proposed plan using maps and other appropriate materials to facilitate discussion regarding public issues, concerns, and access needs.
- Produce a map depicting the designated roads, primitive roads, and trails available for use (also see Appendix D).
- Implement decisions on the ground. Rehabilitate roads that have been identified through the process as closed to motorized traffic on a case-by-case basis to discourage continued motorized use. In addition, place signs and barriers and produce public maps and other appropriate forms of education and communication to inform the public of updated route designations (also see Appendix D).

**TM-5:** Limit motorized vehicle traffic to designated routes within desert tortoise habitat outside of designated wilderness. This action will be given a high priority for completion (also see Appendix D).

**TM-6:** Restrict the establishment of new permanent roads and trails in designated desert tortoise habitat. New access routes may be allowed on a temporary basis, or permanently if approved through the NEPA process (also see Appendix D).

**TM-7:** Reroute roads and trails, where feasible, to improve manageability of desert tortoise habitat (also see Appendix D).

**TM-8:** Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lincoln County Road Department, and the Nevada Department of Transportation when possible to identify roads and trails with high tortoise mortality due to impacts from vehicles. Fences and culverts may be installed along these roads and trails to allow for the safe passage of desert tortoises.

### **Parameter – Off-highway Vehicles**

**TM-9:** Manage off-highway vehicles in accordance with the following designations (see **Map 16**).

- Off-highway vehicle use limited to designated roads and trails: 10,306,500 acres.
- Closed to off-highway vehicle use: 1,153,500 acres. This acreage reflects designated wilderness and wilderness study areas.

### ***Monitoring – Travel Management***

Roads within the planning area will be monitored, usually on an annual basis in coordination with other BLM resource programs and county highway departments, to determine maintenance needs. Monitoring of closed roads will be done in conjunction with monitoring associated with other resource uses such as watershed condition or off-highway vehicle use. The purpose of this monitoring is to ensure that closed roads are not being used and that resource damage, such as erosion, is not occurring.

Monitoring off-highway vehicle uses within the planning area will focus on compliance with specific designations, and will determine whether these uses are causing adverse effects on various resources (i.e., soils, water, air, vegetation, fish and wildlife, etc.). Roads and trails are common vectors for noxious and invasive species and monitoring will routinely occur. Methods of monitoring may include visitor contacts, permit review, visual surveillance (including aerial reconnaissance), traffic counters, and/or periodic patrols to check boundaries, signing, visitor use, and limits of acceptable change. Closures will be monitored to ensure public safety and protect affected roadbeds or areas. Baseline data will be established for sites where off-highway vehicle use is occurring, and sites will be rehabilitated or closed as necessary.

### **Recreation**

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act provides for recreation use of public land as an integral part of multiple use management. Dispersed, unstructured activities typify the recreational uses occurring throughout the majority of the planning area. BLM Manual 8300 directs the BLM to designate special units known as special recreation management areas. Management within special recreation management areas focuses on providing recreation opportunities that will not otherwise be available to the public, reducing conflicts among users, minimizing damage to resources, and reducing visitor health and safety problems.

***Goals – Recreation***

Provide quality settings for developed and undeveloped recreation experiences and opportunities while protecting resources.

Conduct an assessment of current and future off-highway vehicle demand, and plan for and balance the demand for this use with other multiple uses/users.

Develop sustainable off-highway vehicle use areas to meet current and future demands, especially for urban interface areas.

***Objectives – Recreation***

To provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities to satisfy a growing demand by a public seeking the open, undeveloped spaces that are characteristic of the planning area.

To provide visitor information to familiarize people with recreational opportunities throughout the planning area and encourage minimum impact or “Leave No Trace” and “Tread Lightly” recreational skills and ethics for recreational activities.

***Management Actions – Recreation***

**Parameter – Special Recreation Management Areas**

**REC-1:** Manage for the protection of cave resources in the planning area according to the Ely District Office Cave Management Plan.

**REC-2:** Manage five special recreation management areas for a broad recreation opportunity spectrum ensuring a balance of recreation experiences (see **Map 17**).

- The **Loneliest Highway Special Recreation Management Area** (675,123 acres);
- The **Chief Mountain Special Recreation Management Area** (111,181 acres);
- The **Egan Crest Special Recreation Management Area** (53,455 acres);
- The **Pahranagat Special Recreation Management Area** (298,500 acres); and
- The **North Delamar Special Recreation Management Area** (202,890 acres).

**REC-3:** Develop recreation sites, as appropriate, to proactively manage for tourism and recreation experiences.

**REC-4:** Write recreation area management plans for each special recreation management area identified in REC-2 to provide further management guidance at a site-specific level. The process for development of recreation area management plans is described as follows:

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

- Establish an interdisciplinary team to ensure broad participation.
- Hold public scoping meetings, as appropriate, to identify the potentially affected publics. Involve Resource Advisory Councils, local government, state and federal agencies, gateway communities, local user groups as applicable to the recreation management area. Prepare appropriate maps to facilitate discussion in identifying issues, concerns and desired future needs.
- Using information from the interdisciplinary team and through public scoping, identify different recreation niches to be served in the special recreation management area. Write specific objectives for the recreation opportunities that would be provided and managed. Use the recreation opportunity spectrum to describe the existing setting character and the desired future setting character.
- Collect and analyze data identified through the scoping process to assist in the development of the best set of proposed actions to meet the recreation and other resource objectives of the area.
- All recreation area management plans will incorporate guidance from Appendix C of the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook. Plans would address the following:
  - Development of specific recreation management zones within each special recreation management area.
  - Public education and interpretation. This would include working with the local communities and other land management agencies in public outreach as well as in marketing an areas recreation opportunities.
  - Monitoring.
  - Necessary support actions for the administration of the areas including any business plans, fee programs, permit programs and potential concessionaires.
- Utilize Best Management Practices to mitigate localized disturbances to wildlife. These may include, but are not limited to: placement of signs and public education at key recreation access areas; identification of seasonal motorized route closures to protect wildlife during sensitive periods of their lifecycles; re-routes or existing roads and trails; permanent closures of existing routes; and the establishment of recreation use limitations.

**REC-5:** Manage areas not designated as Special Recreation Management Areas as extensive recreation management areas. A majority of the planning area is available for dispersed, backcountry, and undeveloped recreational uses.

**REC-6:** Manage for recreation facilities and services such as trails, trailheads, staging areas, and associated structures in extensive recreation management areas following activity-level plans and NEPA analysis for the management of designated wilderness, ACECs, the Silver State Off-highway Vehicle Trail,

backcountry byways, and where appropriate, for management of recreational impacts to natural and cultural resources.

**REC-7:** Develop or construct recreation trails and routes in extensive recreation management areas as future needs are identified in site-specific planning.

**REC-8:** Conduct a study of potential routes for the Silver State Off-highway Vehicle trail in White Pine County in accordance with Subtitle E of the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006.

**REC-9:** Continue to provide visitor orientation information, interpretive activities, signage, safety programs, and other visitor outreach activities. Familiarize the public with recreational opportunities throughout the planning area and encourage minimum impact or “Leave No Trace” behavior for recreational activities.

**Parameter – Special Recreation Permits**

**REC-10:** Monitor the use and number of outfitter and guide permits for geographic regions within the planning area for 3 years following plan implementation. Following the monitoring period, issue outfitter and guide permits with special stipulations and conditions to protect resources and reduce user conflicts.

**REC-11:** Manage four special recreation permit areas totaling approximately 1.3 million acres to provide opportunities for competitive motorcycle special recreation permit events (see **Map 18**).

**REC-12:** Manage competitive motorcycle events on designated routes within special recreation permit areas (see **Map 18**).

**REC-13:** Designate event routes and develop additional mitigation in subsequent activity level plans (also see Appendix D).

**REC-14:** Manage for a maximum of two competitive truck events each calendar year.

**REC-15:** Manage four routes for competitive truck events. Rotate use of routes to lessen impacts.

**REC-16:** Permit non-competitive off-highway vehicle events on a case-by-case basis.

**REC-17:** Close desert tortoise ACECs to all high-speed, competitive off-highway vehicle use (also see Appendix D).

**REC-18:** Close desert tortoise ACECs to all types of organized non-speed, off-highway vehicle events from March 1 to June 15, and September 1 to October 31 (also see Appendix D).

**REC-19:** Limit non-speed off-highway vehicle events in desert tortoise ACECs as identified in **Table 14** (also see Appendix D).

**REC-20:** Limit vehicle off-loading areas, if authorized within desert tortoise habitat, to areas of existing disturbance. Limit event size by the number of vehicles that can be involved without expanding the disturbed area. Terms and conditions and best management practices describe stipulations that will be attached to all special recreation permits for organized off-highway vehicle events in desert tortoise habitat.

**Table 14**  
**Summary of Limitations for Non-speed Off-highway Vehicle Events**  
**Within Desert Tortoise ACECs**

Stipulations	Corridors		
	Carp-Elgin, Halfway Wash, and East Halfway Wash	Littlefield	Kane Springs Road
Dates allowed for events	June 16 – August 31 November 1 – February 28-29	November 1 – February 28-29	June 16 – August 31 November 1 – February 28-29
Maximum number of vehicles	100	300 4-wheeled vehicles or 400 motorcycles	300
Maximum number of laps	1	1	1
Maximum number of events allowed per tortoise ACEC	3	4	4

**REC-21:** Implement the following management actions for desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7**). Implement the additional conditions for desert tortoise and conditions for the Southwest willow flycatcher, White River springfish, Pahrump poolfish, and Big Springs spinedace habitat contained in the 2008 Biological Opinion (Appendix D) (also refer to discussions on Special Status Species).

- For speed events: Event participants will be informed that they will not ride their ATVs or motorcycles in the desert after they finish an event. This includes the open desert as well as roads and trails. Failure to comply with this condition by anyone associated with a particular rider will result in the disqualification of that rider.
- For speed events including non-speed sections: If a vehicle breaks down, it will be moved to the side of the race course, avoiding damage to vegetation to the extent possible. Participants who stop to rest will pull over onto side roads or areas devoid of perennial vegetation, if possible. Riders who voluntarily retire from the event will either wait along the course for their crew to pick them up, or travel along the course to a pit area. Chase crews will be limited to retrieving vehicles that are broken down along the course. All chase vehicles must have a pit pass, retrieval pass, or other form of access permission from the Ely District Office.
- For speed events: No spectators or spectator areas will be allowed in ACECs. Spectator vehicles will be allowed in designated spectator areas only. Spectator areas will be confined to existing disturbed areas or new areas selected in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Spectator areas are established for viewing purposes only and vehicles will be prohibited. The promoter will be required to mark the boundaries of the spectator area so that spectators can readily tell where the boundary is

located. Rope or wire with warning triangles or other similar sturdy materials will be used. A monitor will be placed at each spectator area to ensure spectators remain within the designated boundary. Anyone found outside of the designated area will be subject to citation.

- For speed events: Pit crews will use only authorized pit areas. Pits shall be confined to existing disturbed areas, unless otherwise approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Pit areas will be marked with a sign stating that a pit pass is required. A maximum of ten pit passes will be issued to each entrant; however, in unusual cases, the Ely District Office may authorize issuance of additional passes to meet specific needs or conditions. Under no circumstances will the issuance of additional passes create or contribute to expansion of designated pit areas. Pit passes should be identified by color or unique number, the name and date of event, and distinguish the pit to which the pass applies (i.e., main pit or course pit), and will be affixed to the windshield of each vehicle. Vehicles in the pit area without pit passes will be towed at the owner's expense. Unauthorized duplication of pit passes will result in disqualification of the entrant and this will be stated on each pass.
- For speed events including non-speed sections: All event-related activities will be confined to authorized vehicle routes, pit areas, spectator areas, and the course itself, and will not stray into vegetated areas. All major access routes leading into restricted areas will be monitored or marked closed and bannered off. Personnel will be stationed at these areas, as appropriate, to enforce access restrictions. Directional signs to spectator and pit areas will be posted at all main access points. "Race-in-progress" signs will be posted at each location where the race crosses another road. Other disqualification or hazard zones will be monitored periodically during the event.
- For all events, Ely District Office staff will be present to check for compliance with stipulations of the race permit. The importance of staying on the race course will be stressed to all participants by the Ely District Office and promoter.
- For all events: A sufficient number of BLM rangers, monitors, and crowd control officials, as determined by the Ely District Office in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will be required to enforce compliance with stipulations of the event permit. Monitors may be Ely District Office or proponent personnel and will be stationed at all disqualification or hazard areas to record any violations. As a general guideline, the Ely District Office will provide one law enforcement officer per 50 participants to control unauthorized vehicular travel off existing roads, and ensure that habitat damage does not occur. The number of law enforcement officers present may be increased or decreased based on the event proponent's past history of event management and stipulation compliance, the estimated number of spectators, geographic setting of the event, or experience gained from previous similar events, at the discretion of the BLM's authorizing officer.
- For all events including non-speed sections: To reduce casual use of the race course, the race area may be legally closed to casual use on the day of the race. The promoter will be required to station monitors or post signs at road intersections, prohibiting public access, where the general public is likely to access the race course. A Federal Register notice providing authority to close race areas in the Ely and Las Vegas District Offices will be issued. This will allow BLM law enforcement officers to enforce

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

regulations. A legal notice will be published in the local newspaper, or other appropriate publication, before the permitted events take place.

- For speed events: Publicity runs will not occur within ACECs, and all event-related vehicular activity will be confined to authorized routes and the course itself and will not stray into vegetated areas.
- For all events: To the extent possible, the event course will be cleared of all unauthorized vehicles and personnel prior to each event.
- For all events: Participants in each event who violate any stipulation of that event will be disqualified from the event. Additionally, failure to comply with permit conditions by any member of the support team or spectators associated with a particular driver or rider will result in the disqualification of that driver or rider.
- For all events: Participants will be informed that passing will be limited to the disturbed areas of roads, trails, and washes and will not occur in vegetated areas adjacent to the course.
- For speed events: To help control spectators, the event promoter will station at least one person at the primary entrance to the spectator area for at least 2 hours before the start of the race and 1 hour after the start of the race. This individual will stop all cars coming into the area, give the occupants information on the limits of the spectator area, and advise them where they can and cannot park.
- For non-speed portions of speed events in ACECs: Participants will be escorted through the ACEC at a speed of no greater than 25 miles per hour.
- For organized non-off-highway vehicle events within ACECs (e.g., dog trials, model airplane events, etc.): The event area will be surveyed for desert tortoise immediately prior to the event. If desert tortoise or sign of desert tortoise is observed, the event will be moved to a different location or set up in such way as to avoid adverse effects to desert tortoise.
- Horse endurance rides will be limited to existing roads and trails. Horse endurance rides are considered speed events and will not be permitted in desert tortoise ACECs.

### ***Monitoring – Recreation***

Monitoring of recreational use will be designed to ensure visitor compliance with rules and regulations, establish baseline data and observation points for determining impacts from recreation use, and determine appropriate levels and patterns of recreational use. Monitoring will focus on visitation levels and dispersed uses; compliance with rules, regulations, and permit stipulations for specific sites (developed sites); and prescribed standards and guidelines as set in the respective recreation opportunity spectrum classes. Methods of monitoring may include the use of visitor contacts; traffic counters; surveillance at developed recreation sites; periodic patrols to check boundaries, signing, and visitor use; and studies to determine limits of acceptable change, including photo documentation of the changes in resource conditions over time.



Monitoring data will be used to manage visitor use, develop plans and projects to reduce visitor impacts, and meet visitor demand.

## **Livestock Grazing**

The Taylor Grazing Act, as amended and supplemented, is the legislative authority providing for livestock grazing on, and protection of, public land. The Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 and the Public Rangeland Improvement Act of 1978 direct the management of public land for multiple use and sustained yield. Rangeland management strategies will provide for the maintenance or restoration of watershed function, nutrient cycling and energy flow, water quality, habitat for special status species, and habitat quality for populations and communities of native plants and animals. These management strategies have been supported by development of Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing for the Mojave/Southern Great Basin and Northeastern Great Basin regions, which were adopted and approved by the Secretary of Interior in 1997.

### ***Goals – Livestock Grazing***

Manage livestock grazing on public lands to provide for a level of livestock grazing consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and watershed function and health.

#### **Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards**

- Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.
- Riparian and wetland areas exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria.
- Habitats exhibit a healthy, productive, and diverse population of native and/or desirable plant species, appropriate to the site characteristics, to provide suitable feed, water, cover and living space for animal species and maintain ecological processes. Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of threatened and endangered species.

#### **Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards**

- Watershed soils and stream banks should have adequate stability to resist accelerated erosion, maintain soil productivity, and sustain the hydrologic cycle.
- Watersheds should possess the necessary ecological components to achieve state water quality criteria, maintain ecological processes, and sustain appropriate uses. Riparian and wetlands vegetation should have structural and species diversity characteristic of the stage of stream channel succession in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, and capture, retain, and safely release water (watershed function).

- Habitats and watersheds should sustain a level of biodiversity appropriate for the area and conducive to appropriate uses. Habitats of special status species should be able to sustain viable populations of those species.

### ***Objectives – Livestock Grazing***

To allow livestock grazing to occur in a manner and at levels consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and the standards for rangeland health.

### ***Management Actions – Livestock Grazing***

**LG-1:** Make approximately 11,246,900 acres and 545,267 animal unit months available for livestock grazing on a long-term basis (see **Map 19**).

**LG-2:** The following public lands are unavailable for livestock grazing (see **Map 19**):

- Mormon Mesa, Kane Springs, and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs (203,670 acres);
- Baker Archaeological Site ACEC (80 acres) and Snake Creek Indian Burial Cave ACEC (40 acres);
- Leased public lands associated with the Coyote Springs Development (6,200 acres);
- Public lands west of U.S. Highway 93 and west of the Desert National Wildlife Range (6,900 acres); and
- Private/Utah Allotment above Beaver Dam State Park (4,400 acres).

**LG-3:** Allow allotments or portions of allotments within desert tortoise habitat, but outside of ACECs to remain at current stocking levels as shown in **Table 15** unless a subsequent evaluation indicates a need to change the stocking level (also see Appendix D).

**LG-4:** Continue to monitor and evaluate allotments to determine if they are continuing to meet or are making significant progress toward meeting the standards for rangeland health. **Table E-1** in Appendix E shows the current grazing preference, season-of-use, and kind of livestock for those allotments that currently are evaluated for meeting standards, are making progress towards achieving the standards, or are in conformance with the policies as determined either through the allotment evaluation process or associated with fully processed term permit renewals. Changes, such as improved livestock management, new range improvement projects, and changes in the amount and kinds of forage permanently available for livestock use, can lead to changes in preference, authorized season-of-use, or kind of livestock. Such changes will continue to meet the RMP goals and objectives, including the standards for rangeland health.

**Table 15**  
**Allotments Within Desert Tortoise Habitat but Outside ACECs**

Allotment	Map Unit Number <sup>1</sup>	Season-of-use	Active Use Animal Unit Months
Boulder Spring	22	10/1 to 3/31	416
Breedlove	23	3/1 to 2/28	698
Buckhorn	26	3/1 to 3/28	3,370
Delmar	57	3/1 to 2/28	5,558
Garden Spring	76	10/1 to 5/31	2,809
Gourd Springs	85	10/1 to 5/31	3,458
Grapevine	86	3/1 to 2/28	349
Henrie Complex	91	3/1 to 2/28	1,380
Lime Mountain	102	10/1 to 5/15	6,754
Lower Lake East	106	3/1 to 2/28	640
Lower Lake West	107	3/1 to 2/28	1,247
Lower Riggs	108	5/1 to 3/24	1,408
Mormon Peak	126	3/1 to 2/28	600
Pahranagat East	143	8/1 to 5/31	511
Pahranagat West	144	10/1 to 5/31	2,144
Snow Spring	191	10/1 to 5/31	3,567
Summit Spring	202	10/1 to 5/15	715
Terry	207	11/1 to 5/31	1,511
White Rock	222	10/1 to 5/31	2,880

<sup>1</sup> Map unit number refers to livestock grazing allotments shown on Appendix E.

**LG-5:** Maintain the current grazing preference, season-of-use, and kind of livestock until the allotments that have not been evaluated for meeting or making progress toward meeting the standards or are in conformance with the policies are evaluated (see **Table E-2** in Appendix E). Depending on the results of the standards assessment, maintain or modify grazing preference, seasons-of-use, kind of livestock, and grazing management practices to achieve the standards for rangeland health. Changes, such as improved livestock management, new range improvement projects, and changes in the amount and kinds of forage permanently available for livestock use, can lead to changes in preference, authorized season-of-use, or kind of livestock. Ensure changes continue to meet the RMP goals and objectives, including the standards for rangeland health.

**LG-6:** When changes to BLM grazing permits are being considered in Rocky Mountain and desert bighorn sheep occupied habitat, manage domestic sheep and goats in accordance with current BLM policy.

**LG-7:** Manage allotments that become vacant, for any reason including relinquishment by the permittee, to best meet site-specific and land use planning objectives. Authorized uses may include new grazing permits, forage reserve allotments, dedication to purposes that preclude livestock grazing, and others such as offsetting allotments for permittees who are displaced for any reason.

**LG-8:** Implement management actions for desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7**) contained in the 2008 Biological Opinion (Appendix D). Implement conditions in the Biological Opinion for the Southwest willow

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

flycatcher, White River springfish, Pahrump poolfish, and Big Springs spinedace habitat (also refer to discussions on Special Status Species).

### ***Monitoring – Livestock Grazing***

Monitoring to assess rangeland health standards will include records of actual livestock use, measurements of forage utilization, ecological site inventory data, cover data, soil mapping, and allotment evaluations or rangeland health assessments. Conditions and trends of resources affected by livestock grazing will be monitored to support periodic analysis/evaluation, site-specific adjustments of livestock management actions, and term permit renewals. Monitoring will determine when grazing will be authorized in burned areas, and will contribute to the selection of prescribed burn treatments or other types of treatments based on attainment of resource objectives.

## **Forest/Woodland Products**

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 directs BLM to “. . . manage public lands according to the principles of multiple-use and sustained yield . . .” One of the multiple uses of resources within the planning area includes the use of forest/woodland areas for fuelwood collection, pinyon nut harvesting, Christmas tree harvesting, posts and poles, seed collection, cactus and yucca collection, and other vegetation product collection. Vegetation management tools (e.g., prescribed fires, thinning) will allow for the regeneration of forest/woodland vegetation types and the selective thinning of these communities to improve their overall health within the planning area and achievement of applicable Resource Advisory Council standards and the desired ranges of conditions for various types of woodlands. Commercial collection of cacti, yucca, and evergreen trees within the state also is regulated under Nevada Revised Statutes (N.R.S. 527.060.120) and the Nevada Administrative Code Chapter 527.

### ***Goals – Forest/Woodland Products***

Provide opportunities for traditional and non-traditional uses of vegetation products on a sustainable, multiple-use basis.

### ***Objectives – Forest/Woodland Products***

To make healthy forest/woodlands and populations of other plants available for the responsible harvesting of forest/woodland and plant products by the public, commercial interests, and American Indians and allow access for traditional and non-traditional uses.

***Management Actions – Forest/Woodland Products***

**General Forest/Woodland and Other Plant Product Management**

**FP-1:** Do not allow bristlecone pine, limber pine, or swamp cedar to be harvested except for education, scientific, research purposes; for salvage; or for the purpose of preventing or limiting insect or disease problems. Do not permit the cutting of rare or unique trees and shrubs including bearing trees.

**FP-2:** Allow the sale and salvage of desert vegetation (primarily cactus and yucca) based on NEPA analysis and, if necessary, Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**FP-3:** Allow the harvest of desert vegetation for educational or scientific research purposes.

**FP-4:** Limit vehicle traffic associated with woodland and vegetation product harvesting to existing roads and trails except in areas where completed site-specific analysis or activity plans (e.g., watershed analysis, forestry management plans, etc.) allow. Specific areas would be identified as a condition of the permits/contracts for large quantity sales of vegetation products. These areas generally would be in locations where such activity would assist in meeting watershed objectives.

**Parameter – Fuelwood Collection**

**FP-5:** Allow collection of fuelwood from both live and dead trees for personal use (pinyon, juniper, and mountain mahogany) and commercial use (pinyon and juniper) throughout the planning area, except in closed areas (e.g., wilderness study areas, designated wilderness).

**FP-6:** Allow harvest/collection of other tree species (e.g., aspen, ponderosa pine, and white fir) on a case-by-case basis or through the watershed analysis process.

**Parameter – Pinyon Pine Nut Harvesting**

**FP-7:** Allow personal use collection of pine nuts throughout the planning area.

**FP-8:** Utilize commercial harvest sale areas that have been designated throughout the planning area after coordination with American Indian tribes to avoid traditional use areas. Sell these sites through a competitive bidding process. When the competitive bidding is complete and the sales are awarded, the specific sale area will be documented on the permittee's contract.

**Parameter – Christmas Tree Harvesting**

**FP-9:** Make pinyon, juniper, and white fir available for personal use throughout the planning area, except in closed areas (e.g., wilderness study areas, designated wilderness).

**FP-10:** Allow commercial use to only pinyon and juniper throughout the planning area.

**FP-11:** Make white fir available for commercial harvest if future site-specific planning activities (e.g., watershed analysis) determine that harvest will assist in achieving the desired range of conditions, health and resiliency of the stand, and site-specific objectives for the site.

### **Parameter – Post and Pole Harvesting**

**FP-12:** Make pinyon and juniper available for personal and commercial use throughout the planning area, except in closed areas.

**FP-13:** Allow the use of aspen, fir, and spruce on a case-by-case basis, and if harvest will improve the health of the stand.

**FP-14:** If harvest will assist in achieving site-specific objectives, designate areas open to harvest with specified limitations until desired conditions are achieved.

### **Parameter – Seed Collection**

**FP-15:** Allow commercial collection on a case-by-case basis.

**FP-16:** Do not allow harvesting of more than 50 percent of the annual seed crop available in any one area.

**FP-17:** Do not allow seed harvest of special status plants except for research, federally/state endorsed propagation for restoration, or case-specific small scale commercial/personal use regulated under permit process. All special status seed harvest will be monitored by the Ely District Office, in the form of permit requirements.

**FP-18:** Encourage hand collection methods, and allow mechanical collection on a limited basis.

### **Parameter – Other Vegetation Products (i.e., wildings, boughs, etc.) Collection**

**FP-19:** Allow personal and commercial collection on a case-by-case basis.

**FP-20:** Specify areas for collection on the vegetation sales contract.

**FP-21:** Limit collection methods to those with the least surface disturbing activities.

### **Parameter – Biomass Products**

**FP-22:** Allow biomass harvest in areas where vegetation projects require vegetation removal and meet project objectives.

### ***Monitoring – Forest/Woodland Products***

Periodic monitoring will ensure that commercial use of forest/woodland products within designated areas is in accordance with specifications provided in the contract, and that public use throughout the planning area occurs in accordance with the Approved RMP. If monitoring shows that harvest in a specific area is causing nonattainment of vegetation objectives, the area will be closed until it is determined that objectives are being met and harvest could be allowed to resume. Outbreaks of disease and infestations of insects affecting woodland species will be monitored to ensure timely implementation of management actions to limit the spread and level of damage related to such problems.

### **Geology and Mineral Extraction**

The general mining laws give the public the right to locate and develop mining claims on public land. The Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 declares that it is the continuing policy of the federal government to foster and encourage private enterprise in the development of domestic mineral resources. Section 102 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 directs that the public land will be managed in a manner that recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals and other commodities from the public lands, while protecting scientific, scenic, historic, archeological, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, and hydrologic values. The BLM's mineral and national energy policy states that public lands shall remain open and available for mineral exploration and development unless withdrawal or other administrative action is justified in the national interest.

Federally owned minerals in the public domain are classified into three categories: leasable minerals, locatable minerals, and mineral materials as discussed below. The classifications are based on acts passed by the U.S. Congress. These acts provide the opportunity for the public to explore for, develop, and produce publicly owned minerals.

Leasable minerals are those minerals on public lands where the land is leased to individuals for their exploration and development. The leasable minerals have been subdivided into two classes, fluid and solid. Fluid minerals include oil and gas; geothermal resources and associated by-products; and oil shale, native asphalt, oil impregnated sands, and any other material in which oil is recoverable only by special treatment after the deposit is mined or quarried. Solid leasable minerals are those leased under the mineral leasing acts and those hardrock minerals leased under Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1946 (acquired lands). Solid leasable minerals are specific minerals such as coal and phosphates. All minerals on acquired lands are considered to be leasable minerals. Leasable minerals are associated with the following laws: Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended and supplemented, Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands of 1947, as amended, and the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, as amended.

Locatable minerals are those "minerals acquired through the General Mining Law of 1872, as amended" (National Research Council 1999). Locatable minerals can include gold, silver, platinum, lead, zinc, magnesium, nickel, tungsten, bentonite, barite, feldspar, uranium, and uncommon varieties of sand, gravel, and stone. Locatable minerals on public lands (if open to mineral entry) can be acquired by initially staking claims over the deposits. However, before mining can occur, permits from various state and federal agencies must be obtained.

Mineral materials are common varieties of minerals such as sand, gravel, rock, cinders, and common clay. Mineral materials are disposed of through sales contracts or free use permits and are regulated under the Mineral Material Act of July 23, 1947, as amended, and the Surface Use and Occupancy Act of July 23, 1955. Disturbance of public lands in association with mineral material sales is considered a discretionary activity. This means that the action may be denied if resource concerns cannot be protected or mitigated.

### ***Goals – Geology and Mineral Extraction***

Allow for meeting the Nation's energy needs while providing environmentally responsible production of fluid leasable minerals, and geophysical exploration for energy resources on public lands. Allow development of solid leasable and locatable minerals in a manner to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation. Allow development of mineral materials in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation, meet public demand, and minimize adverse impacts to other resource values.

### ***Objectives – Geology and Mineral Extraction***

To provide for the responsible development of mineral resources to meet local, regional, and national needs, while providing for the protection of other resources and uses.

### **Fluid Mineral Leasing**

Areas available for fluid mineral leasing are identified through management determinations during the planning process. These determinations designate the land as closed or open to leasing, and if open, what stipulations should be applied to the lease. All leases are subject to the terms and conditions of the standard lease form which allows for up to 60-day timing deferments and 200 meter (656 feet) displacements (Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Section 3101.1-2). Stipulations modify the lease rights beyond the standard lease terms. Constraints are considered to be either major, such as no surface occupancy, or moderate. Moderate constraints consist of timing limitations (seasonal restrictions) and controlled surface use restrictions. Timing limitations indicate that a leased area generally is open to development activities except during a specified period of time to protect identified resource values such as wildlife. Controlled surface use stipulations may require operating constraints to protect resources year round; for example, staying on existing roads.

A lease notice may be attached to the lease to inform potential lessees of important resource issues under existing laws and regulations that may result in delays associated with subsequent permitting, and appropriate mitigation of those resource concerns.

Resources are further protected during operational activities through the application of best management practices, as contained in the Gold Book (U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Department of Agriculture 2006) and the development of site-specific conditions of approval.



Under certain conditions, waivers, exceptions, and modification to lease stipulations may be granted. The circumstances for granting an exception, waiver, or modification are attached to each stipulation.

Any lease stipulation may be waived or modified as per Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Section 3101.1-4. A waiver or modification is allowable only if the authorized officer determines that the factors leading to its inclusion in the lease have changed sufficiently to make requirements of the stipulation(s) no longer justified, or mitigation contained in individual permits will preclude unacceptable impacts. If the waiver or modification is of major concern to the public, such modification will be subject to a 30-day public review. This review can be held concurrent with the required 30-day posting of applications for permit to drill. Plan amendments are not required to waive, modify, or provide exception to lease stipulations.

A waiver eliminates a stipulation from the lease. The stipulation waiver can be considered concurrent with application for permit to drill approvals and can be accomplished with any NEPA vehicle available such as an environmental assessment, documentation of NEPA adequacy, categorical exclusion, or any similar process available to the Ely District Office. Waivers can be found in Appendix A, Section 2, for various resource concerns.

A modification usually is considered a long-term change in the stipulation to fit the new conditions for which the stipulation was applied; however, it can be short term as well. Depending upon the site conditions, the stipulation may or may not apply to all actions or authorizations on the leasehold. An example of a modification could be a greater sage-grouse lek site that may no longer need a no surface occupancy stipulation on drilling and construction operations if BLM, in consultation with Nevada Department of Wildlife, determines that portions of the area can be occupied without adversely affecting the sage grouse lek. Public notice is required only if the authorized officer determines it is of major public concern.

An exception is a one-time exception to all or part of the stipulation for a particular action due to changed environmental conditions at the time and place of the action being considered. For example, a seasonal restriction on drilling in critical winter range could be excepted if the winter is mild and the target species have not moved onto the critical portions of the winter range (near the drilling location). In subsequent years, the conditions could change and preclude an exception being granted. Normally, exceptions are considered minor actions and, therefore, are not subject to a 30-day public review.

#### **Solid Leasable, Locatable, and Mineral Materials**

For lands that are open to the location of mining claims, the claimant has statutory authority under the mining laws to ingress, egress, and development of those claims. This authority means that those areas open to mineral entry for the purposes of exploration or development of locatable minerals cannot be unreasonably restricted.

### Mineral Materials (Saleable Minerals)

The same areas are closed for mineral materials as for locatable minerals with the exception of Lower Meadow Valley Wash.

### *Management Actions – Geology and Mineral Extraction*

#### General Geology and Mineral Management

**MIN-1:** Implement the following management actions for desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7**). Implement the additional conditions for desert tortoise and conditions for the Southwest willow flycatcher, White River springfish, Pahrump poolfish, and Big Springs spinedace habitat contained in the 2008 Biological Opinion (Appendix D ) (also refer to discussions on Special Status Species and Lands and Realty). This decision applies to fluid and solid leasable minerals, locatable minerals and mineral materials resources.

- Ensure, through the review of the proposed action and development of the mitigation measures, that the impacts from the proposed action will not jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. The operator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and BLM will need to reach concurrence that proposed actions are below the jeopardy or adverse modification threshold. If it is determined that the proposed action will not be below the jeopardy or adverse modification threshold, the project will not go forward.

#### Parameter – Fluid Leasable Minerals

**MIN-2:** Open to Leasing – Allow leasing on approximately 6.0 million acres open to leasing subject to existing laws, regulations, and formal orders and the terms and conditions of the standard lease form. A lease notice will be attached, where applicable, to inform potential lessees of important resource issues under existing laws and regulations that may result in delays associated with subsequent permitting and appropriate mitigation of those resource concerns. Lease notices will consist of:

**Cultural Site** – Areas of known high potential for cultural sites. Properties known at the time of lease announcements that are listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places will be avoided where possible using lease exclusions or limits on surface use. The preferred avoidance option is to exclude areas containing National Register of Historic Places-eligible sites from leasing and all forms of surface disturbance. The next preferred option is to establish no surface occupancy around these sites, including an adequate buffer. Similar constraints may be placed on proposed lease areas based on probability models and the likelihood of encountering properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Cultural sites not avoided may require consultation with State Historic Preservation Officer and potential treatment plans.

**Historic Sites** – Areas include the Pony Express Trail, the Hastings Cutoff, the Lincoln Highway, and the Osceola Ditch. Any activity planned within 1 mile of these sites must undergo a visual assessment in conjunction with environmental review to determine if the activity will adversely affect the visual integrity.

Appropriate mitigation will take place as necessary to keep the management corridor in as natural a condition as possible. Nondiscretionary activity will be mitigated as needed to preserve the visual integrity.

**Desert Tortoise Habitat** – All proposed projects in desert tortoise habitat will require Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services.

See **Map 20** for Lease Notices.

**Table 16** summarizes the acres open and closed to fluid mineral leasing under the Approved RMP.

**Table 16**  
**Summary of Fluid Mineral Leasing Acreages**

	<b>Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Open to Fluid Mineral Leasing</b>	
Standard Lease Terms and Conditions	6,532,500
Moderate Restrictions (Timing/Surface Use Limitations)	3,277,200
Major Restrictions (No Surface Occupancy)	230,100
<b>Open – Total</b>	<b>10,039,800</b>
<b>Closed to Fluid Mineral Leasing</b>	
Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	1,153,500
Discretionary Closures	306,700
<b>Closed – Total</b>	<b>1,460,200</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>

Note: There will be about 1,087,620 acres of lease notices that could apply to any of the above open categories.

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to hundreds.

**MIN-3:** Open to leasing, subject to moderate constraints – Protect resources beyond the standard lease terms and conditions by requiring timing and controlled surface use restrictions as indicated in **Table 16**. **Table 17** and **Map 20** contain a complete description of all the lease stipulations. There is considerable overlap of acreages associated with various types of timing restrictions. Including this overlap, the cumulative acreage of the separate timing and surface use stipulations totals approximately 3.7 million acres.

Timing stipulations apply to the following wildlife species:

- **Greater Sage-grouse** – The greater sage-grouse is a Nevada BLM sensitive species and was petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened or endangered species. Timing limitations are required to protect greater sage-grouse breeding and nesting activities and habitat during the crucial winter period (also see Appendix D).

**Table 17**  
**Timing and Surface Use Stipulations**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Potential Restriction</b>	<b>Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
Greater Sage-grouse Nesting Habitat Associated with Leks	Timing Limitation. No surface activity will be allowed within two miles of a greater sage-grouse lek from March 1 through May 15.	1,244,200
Greater Sage-grouse Winter Range	Timing Limitation. No surface activity will be allowed within winter range for greater sage-grouse from November 1 through March 31.	100,300
Big Game Calving/Fawning/Kidding/Lambing Grounds	Timing Limitation. No surface activity will be allowed within big game calving/fawning/kidding/lambing grounds from April 15 through June 30.	794,200
Big Game Crucial Winter Range	Timing Limitation. No surface activity will be allowed within big game crucial winter range from November 1 through March 31.	756,800
Desert Tortoise Habitat	Timing Limitation. No surface activity will be allowed within desert tortoise habitat from March 1 to October 31 (also see Appendix D).	314,700
Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat	Timing Limitation. No surface activity will be allowed within occupied desert bighorn sheep habitat from March 1 through May 31 and from July 1 through August 31.	477,600
Raptor Nest Sites	Timing Limitations. No surface activity will be allowed from May 1 through July 15 within 0.5 mile of a raptor nest site that has been active within the past 5 years.	40,900
Totals of Individual Categories (including overlap)		3,728,700

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to hundreds.

- **Raptors** – Raptors (i.e., hawks, eagles, owls, etc.) are protected under numerous laws including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Timing limitations are required to protect raptor nesting activities.
- **Big Game** – Elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep are priority species in the planning area. Timing limitations are required to protect elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep from disturbance during calving, fawning, kidding, and lambing and from disturbance during the crucial winter period.
- **Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat** – The desert bighorn sheep is a Nevada BLM sensitive species and is a priority species in the planning area. Timing limitations are required to protect desert bighorn sheep from disturbance during lambing and the crucial hot summer months.
- **Desert Tortoise Habitat** – The desert tortoise is listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Timing limitations are required to protect desert tortoise during the most active period (also see Appendix D).

**MIN-4:** Stipulation Maintenance – Regularly maintain wildlife databases of species subject to the above stipulations to reflect current inventory status. For example an updated greater sage-grouse lek inventory may show the location of a new lek for which the lease stipulation will be applied in subsequent lease sales.

**MIN-5:** Existing leases – Apply the constraints and requirements identified in this RMP (and ongoing stipulation maintenance) to new use authorizations on existing leases provided that they are within the authority reserved by the terms and conditions of the lease.

**MIN-6:** Open to leasing, subject to major constraints. Apply a no surface occupancy restriction as shown in **Table 18** and **Map 20**. The no surface occupancy for greater sage-grouse leks is a 0.25-mile buffer.

**MIN-7:** Closed to leasing – Close approximately 1.5 million acres to leasing including designated wilderness/wilderness study areas, Congressionally mandated closures, and additional discretionary closures. It is BLM policy to apply the least restrictive constraint to meet the resource protection objective. However, for ACECs (other than desert tortoise ACECs) that exceed 1 mile in length and width, the outer 0.5-mile perimeter is proposed as no surface occupancy and the remainder closed. Areas closed to leasing are shown in **Table 19**.

**MIN-8:** Evaluate geophysical exploration on a case-by-case basis. Geophysical exploration will not necessarily be subject to the same restrictions as shown for fluid leasing.

**MIN-9:** Apply the following special management actions for leasing within desert tortoise habitat (also see Appendix D):

- a. Continue closure of the Kane Springs ACEC to leasing.
- b. Manage the Mormon Mesa and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs as no surface occupancy with exceptions granted upon completion of Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- c. Attach a lease notice for all areas within desert tortoise habitat, to alert the lessee that a Section 7 consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be completed prior to any surface disturbance within desert tortoise habitat.
- d. Impose a timing stipulation for all areas within desert tortoise habitat. The stipulation will involve no surface occupancy from March 1 to October 31.
- e. Unless otherwise authorized, all vehicular traffic will be restricted to existing roads and trails.

**Table 18**  
**No Surface Occupancy for Fluid Mineral Leasing**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Andies Mine Trilobite Site	180
Ash Springs Proposed Withdrawal	80
Baker Archaeological Site ACEC	80
Baking Powder Flat ACEC	6,620
Beaver Dam Slope ACEC <sup>1</sup>	36,800
Blue Mass Scenic Area ACEC	950
Caliente Field Station	2
Cleve Creek Recreation Area	90
Condor Canyon ACEC	2,880
Egan Crest Trailhead	250
Garnet Hill	160
Rock Animal Corral	160
Highland Range ACEC	3,700
Honeymoon Hill/City of Rocks ACEC	3,900
Illipah Reservoir	290
Kirch Wildlife Management Area	5,000
Lower Meadow Valley Wash ACEC	25,000
Mormon Mesa ACEC <sup>1</sup>	66,430
Mount Irish ACEC	8,000
Pahroc Rock Art ACEC	2,400
Pony Springs Fire Station	10
Rose Guano Bat Cave ACEC	40
Sacramento Pass Recreation Site	440
Greater Sage-grouse Leks	31,520
Schlesser Pincushion ACEC	4,930
Shooting Gallery ACEC	5,800
Shoshone Ponds ACEC	1,240
Snake Creek Indian Burial Cave ACEC	40
Sunshine Locality National Register District <sup>1</sup>	6,460
Swamp Cedar ACEC	3,200
Ward Mountain Recreation Site	240
White Pine County Shooting Range	255
White River Archaeological District	230
White River Valley ACEC	13,100
<b>Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>230,477</b>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A, Section 2 for exception.

<sup>2</sup> Total acres differ from summary table due to overlap among individual areas and categories.

**Table 19**  
**Areas Closed to Fluid Mineral Leasing**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Baker Proposed Withdrawal	6,720
Baking Powder Flat ACEC	7,020
Condor Canyon ACEC	1,625
Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	1,153,500
Highland Range ACEC	3,200
Kane Spring ACEC	57,190
Coyote Springs leased public lands (Congressional)	6,200
Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act State Park	4,780
Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Utility Corridors	119,460
Lincoln County Proposed Disposals	57,000
Mount Irish ACEC	7,100
Murry Spring Watershed	1,260
Shooting Gallery ACEC	9,800
Steptoe Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion	6,265
Sunshine Locality National Register District	12,640
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Airport Expansion	1,550
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Industrial Park Expansion	200
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Additional Withdrawals	98,125
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Disposals	18,600
<b>Total*</b>	<b>1,572,235</b>

\* Total acres differ from summary table due to overlap among individual areas and categories.

#### **Parameter – Solid Leasable Minerals**

**MIN-10:** Open to leasing – Allow solid mineral leasing on approximately 9.9 million acres of federal mineral estate, subject to best management practices. **Table 20** and **Map 21** show the areas that will be available to leasing

**Table 20**  
**Summary of Solid Mineral Leasing**

	<b>Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
Open to Solid Mineral Leasing	9,855,400
Closed – Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	1,153,500
Closed – Discretionary	491,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to hundreds.

**MIN-11:** Issue mineral use authorizations for prospecting permits, exploration licenses, preference right leases, competitive leases, lease modifications, and use permits.

**MIN-12:** Closed to leasing – Close approximately 1.6 million acres to solid mineral leasing. This includes designated wilderness and wilderness study areas. Closed areas include existing closed areas carried forward (i.e., Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act). **Table 21** and **Map 21** show the areas that will be closed to leasing.

**MIN-13:** Apply the following special management actions for solid mineral leasing within desert tortoise ACEC habitat:

- a. Continue closure of the Kane Springs ACEC to solid mineral leasing.
- b. Close the Mormon Mesa and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs to solid mineral leasing.

### **Parameter – Locatable Minerals**

**MIN-14:** Open to locatable – Allow locatable mineral development on approximately 9.9 million acres of federal mineral estate, subject to the prevention of unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands (see **Table 22**).

**MIN-15:** Closed to locatable – Manage approximately 1.6 million acres of federal mineral estate from operation of the mining law as closed to locatable mineral entry. Review any lands with closures that expire to determine whether the withdrawals should be extended, revoked, or modified. **Table 21** describes the areas that are closed.

**MIN-16:** Apply the following special management actions for locatable minerals within desert tortoise habitat (also see Appendix D):

- a. Close the Kane Springs, Mormon Mesa, and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs to locatable mineral entry. Existing mining claims that have valid existing rights and mining operations could occur in the ACEC. The BLM will be required to perform validity exams on the existing claims to determine if they are valid claims before any operation may proceed within the ACEC. The operation could proceed once the review of the plan of operation, NEPA review, and Section 7 consultation have occurred.
- b. Inform operators submitting a notice for activities within desert tortoise habitat, but outside of ACECs, of their responsibilities to comply with specific provisions of the Endangered Species Act.



**Table 21**  
**Areas Closed to Solid Leasable, Locatable, and Mineral Materials**

Name	Acres
Andies Mine Trilobite Site	180
Ash Springs Withdrawal	80
Baker Archaeological Site ACEC	80
Baker Withdrawal	6,720
Baking Powder Flat ACEC	13,640
Beaver Dam Slope ACEC <sup>1</sup>	36,800
Blue Mass Scenic Area ACEC	950
Caliente Field Station	2
Cleve Creek Recreation Site	90
Condor Canyon ACEC	4,500
Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	1,153,500
Egan Crest Trailhead	250
Garnet Hill	160
Rock Animal Corral	160
Highland Range ACEC	6,900
Honeymoon Hill / City of Rocks ACEC	3,900
Illipah Reservoir	290
Kane Spring ACEC <sup>1</sup>	57,190
Kirch Wildlife Management Area	5,000
Coyote Springs leased public lands (congressional)	6,200
Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Corridors	119,460
Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act State Park	4,780
Lincoln County Proposed Disposals	57,000
Lower Meadow Valley Wash ACEC <sup>2</sup>	25,000
Mormon Mesa ACEC <sup>1</sup>	66,430
Mount Irish ACEC	15,100
Murry Spring Watershed	1,255
Pahroc Rock Art ACEC	2,400
Pony Springs Fire Station	10
Rose Guano Bat Cave ACEC	40
Sacramento Pass Recreation Site	440
Schlesser Pincushion ACEC	4,930
Shooting Gallery ACEC	15,600
Shoshone Ponds ACEC	1,240
Snake Creek Indian Burial Cave ACEC	40
Steptoe Valley Wildlife Management Area	6,265
Swamp Cedar ACEC	3,200
Ward Mountain Recreation Site	240
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Additional Withdrawal	98,125
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Airport Expansion	1,550
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Industrial Park Expansion	200
White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Proposed Disposals	18,600
White Pine County Shooting Range	255
White River Archaeological District	230
White River Valley ACEC	13,100
<b>Total*</b>	<b>1,752,082</b>

\* Total acres differ from summary table due to overlap among areas and categories.

<sup>1</sup> Subject to exception for existing valid claims.

<sup>2</sup> Closed for solid leasable and locatable minerals, but open with special stipulations for mineral materials. Mineral materials activities subject to controlled surface use, seasonal timing restrictions, restricted or no use in avoidance areas (e.g., riparian areas, live water, areas with special wildlife or plant features, and sensitive viewsheds), additional NEPA analysis, and Section 7 consultation.

**Table 22**  
**Summary of Locatable Minerals**

	<b>Acres</b>
Open to Locatable Minerals	9,855,400
Closed – Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	1,153,500
Closed – Discretionary	491,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to hundreds.

**Parameter – Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)**

**MIN-17:** Open to mineral materials – Allow disposal of mineral materials on approximately 9.9 million acres of federal mineral estate, subject to best management practices (see **Table 23** and **Map 21**).

**Table 23**  
**Summary of Mineral Materials**

	<b>Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
Open to Mineral Materials	9,865,600
Closed – Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	1,153,500
Closed – Discretionary	480,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to hundreds.

**MIN-18:** Space mineral material sites appropriately to accommodate public and private needs while preserving environmental qualities.

**MIN-19:** Maintain and locate community pits and common use areas to provide for the needs of local communities as they develop.

**MIN-20:** Closed to mineral materials – Close approximately 1.6 million acres to mineral materials disposal as shown in **Table 23** and **Map 21**.

**MIN-21:** Apply the following special management actions for mineral material disposal within desert tortoise habitat (also see Appendix D):

- a. Close the Kane Springs, Mormon Mesa and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs to mineral material disposal except for a 1-mile-wide corridor, 0.5-mile each side of the road, on designated roads (U.S. Highway 93, Carp-Elgin, and Kane Springs roads). Space mineral material site developments to provide approximately 10 miles between adjacent sites. This corridor will be open only for free use permits and

federal highway material site rights-of-way. Within desert tortoise ACECs, allow mineral materials disposal within the three designated 1-mile-wide corridors only from November 1 through February 28/29.

- b. Close and reclaim existing pits and designations identified as not needed to meet current and future demand.

### ***Monitoring – Geology and Mineral Extraction***

Monitoring of mineral action disturbances will ensure compliance with Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subparts 3100 (oil and gas leasing), 3200 (geothermal leasing), 3500 (solid mineral leasing), 3600 (mineral materials disposal), 3715 (mining occupancy), 3802 (mining, wilderness review), and 3809 (surface management) regulations. Monitoring activities will consist of periodic field inspections of mineral extraction disturbances.

Monitoring for leasable minerals will ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, term and conditions of leases, standard practices and procedures for geophysical exploration, and conditions of approval for drilling and production operations. On producing leases, monitoring is intended to ensure an accurate accounting of material produced and protect the environment and public health and safety. Monitoring will include field inspection of leasable mineral activities as authorized under Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subparts 3161 and 3590.

Monitoring for locatable minerals will include periodic field inspections of mining and exploration operations. BLM policy establishes minimum inspection frequencies for mining operations as follows: quarterly inspections are required for all operations using cyanide, and biannual inspections for all other active operations. Operations in sensitive areas or operations with a high potential for greater than usual impacts will be inspected more often. Reclamation would be in accordance with the Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subpart 3809, 3715, and BLM Handbook H3042-1. Any noncompliance items will be noted and resolved in accordance with Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subparts 3809 and 3715.

Monitoring for mineral materials will ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, BLM policy contained in BLM Manual Section 3600 and Handbook H-3600-1, the Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subpart 3600 regulations, and the requirements of approved contracts and operation plans. An accurate accounting of material removed; protection of the environment and public health and safety; identification and resolution of mineral material trespass issues; and reclamation will be ensured. Monitoring activities will include periodic field inspection of common use areas and other mineral material extraction operations. Operations in sensitive environmental areas or operations with a high potential for greater than usual impacts will be inspected more often and noncompliance items will be noted under procedures as directed by Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subpart 3600.

## **Watershed**

The planning area has been divided into 61 watershed units (entire watersheds or manageable portions thereof). Watershed conditions are controlled by climate, geology, topography, vegetation, and soil characteristics. Vegetation and soil conditions change naturally over time in response to climate, fire, and other natural processes and management. The rate water is captured by the watershed, the amount of storage available, and the rate and location of water release depends on the amount and type of vegetation and type and condition of soil. Thus, healthy watersheds are dependent on achieving or maintaining land health standards.

### ***Goals – Watershed***

Manage watersheds to achieve and maintain resource functions and conditions required for healthy lands and sustainable uses.

### **Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standards**

- Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.
- Riparian and wetland areas exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria.
- Habitats exhibit a healthy, productive, and diverse population of native and/or desirable plant species, appropriate to the site characteristics; to provide suitable feed, water, cover, and living space for animal species; and maintain ecological processes. Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of threatened and endangered species.
- Land use plans will recognize cultural resources within the context of multiple use.

### **Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Standards**

- Watershed soils and stream banks should have adequate stability to resist accelerated erosion, maintain soil productivity, and sustain the hydrologic cycle.
- Watersheds should possess the necessary ecological components to achieve state water quality criteria, maintain ecological processes, and sustain appropriate uses.
- Riparian and wetlands vegetation should have structural and species diversity characteristic of the stage of stream channel succession in order to provide forage and cover; capture sediment; and capture, retain, and safely release water (watershed function).

- Habitats and watersheds should sustain a level of biodiversity appropriate for the area and conducive to appropriate uses. Habitats of special status species should be able to sustain viable populations of those species.

***Objectives – Watershed***

To manage watersheds that display physical and biological conditions or functions required for necessary ecological components to achieve state water quality criteria, maintain ecological processes, and sustain appropriate uses.

***Management Actions – Watershed***

**WS-1:** Perform watershed analysis initially on the following watersheds: North Spring Valley, Antelope Valley, Gleason Creek, Smith Valley, South Steptoe Valley, Clover Creek South, North Antelope Valley, Steptoe A, and Spring Valley. When these analyses are complete, analyze the high priority watersheds listed in **Table 24** followed by the low priority watersheds.

**Table 24**  
**Watershed Priority for Analysis and Treatment**

<b>Watershed Name</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Watershed Name</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Watershed Name</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Antelope Valley	High	North Spring Valley	High	Big Sand Springs Valley	Low
Beaver Dam Wash	High	Panaca Valley	High	Butte	Low
Cave Valley	High	Patterson Wash	High	Central Little Smoky Valley	Low
Clover Creek North	High	Rose Valley	High	Coal Valley	Low
Clover Creek South	High	Smith Valley	High	Deep Creek	Low
Coyote Springs	High	Snake Valley South	High	Delamar Valley	Low
Dry Lake Valley	High	South Spring Valley	High	Duck Creek Basin	Low
Dry Valley	High	South Steptoe Valley	High	Egan Basin	Low
Duck Water	High	Spring Valley	High	Emmigrant	Low
Eagle Valley	High	Spring Valley South East	High	Fox-gap Mountain	Low
Escalante Desert	High	Spring Valley South West	High	Garden Valley	Low
Gleason Creek	High	Steptoe A	High	Jakes Valley	Low
Hamblin Valley	High	Steptoe B	High	North Little Smoky Valley	Low
Huntington	High	Steptoe C	High	Park Range	Low
Kane Spring Wash	High	Tikaboo Valley	High	Railroad Valley	Low
Lake Valley	High	Toquop Wash	High	Ruby Valley	Low
Long Valley	High	Tule Desert	High	Sand Hollow Wash	Low
Meadow Valley Wash N	High	White River Central	High	Sand Spring Valley	Low
Meadow Valley Wash S	High	White River North	High	Snake Valley North	Low
Newark	High	White River South	High	South Little Smoky Valley	Low
North Antelope Valley	High				

**WS-2:** Additional forage resulting from implementation of vegetation restoration projects identified through the watershed analysis process will be allocated to livestock and wild horses and/or reserved for watershed maintenance and wildlife, depending on the degree of watershed function required to maintain rangeland health standards.

### ***Monitoring – Watershed***

Most parameters essential for evaluating watershed health (e.g., vegetation cover, species composition and community structure, erosion features, resistance to disturbance, etc.) will be monitored in conjunction with other resource programs such as vegetation and soils.

## **Fire**

The BLM is charged with clearly defining fire management goals, objectives, and actions in comprehensive fire management plans. Strategic watershed-scale fuel management and fire use planning that integrates a variety of treatment methods, will cost-effectively reduce fuel hazards to acceptable levels and benefit ecological system health. Fire management programs and activities should be based upon safety to fire fighters and the public, protecting resources, minimizing costs, and achieving land management objectives.

### ***Goals – Fire***

Provide an appropriate management response to all wildland fires, with emphasis on firefighter and public safety, consistent with overall management objectives. Return fire to its natural role in the ecological system and implement fuels treatments, where applicable, to aid in returning fire to the ecological system. Establish a community education program that includes fuels reduction within the wildland urban interface to create fire-safe communities.

### ***Objectives – Fire***

To manage wildland and prescribed fires as one of the tools in the treatment of vegetation communities and watersheds to achieve the desired range of condition for vegetation, watersheds, and other resource programs (e.g., livestock, wild horses, soils, etc.).

### ***Management Actions – Fire***

**FM-1:** Use prescribed fire and wildland fire in compliance with applicable smoke management requirements as specified by the Nevada Smoke Management Program. Obtain annual permits and provide daily evaluation of the fire conditions to ensure applicable air quality regulations are not violated.

**FM-2:** Coordinate with the Department of Defense when planning prescribed burns utilizing aircraft within their military operating air spaces in the planning area.

**FM-3:** Implement and update the Ely Fire Management Plan, as needed. Tier the Ely Fire Management Plan to the general fire management actions in this RMP. Fire management units within the planning area have been identified on the basis of similar vegetation type and condition, management constraints, issues, and objectives and strategies (see **Map 22** and **Table 25**). The following management actions will take place within those fire management units.

**Table 25**  
**Summary of Fire Management Units for the Ely District Office**

Number	Name	Type <sup>1</sup>
NV-040-01	Meadow Valley-Deerlodge	Vegetation
NV-040-02	Irish/Timber/Worthington Mountains	Vegetation
NV-040-03	Northern Mountains	Vegetation
NV-040-04	Southern Benches	Vegetation
NV-040-05	Seaman Range-Murphy Gap	Vegetation
NV-040-06	Elgin/Blue Nose/Kane Spring Pinyon Juniper	Vegetation
NV-040-07	Southern Valleys	Vegetation
NV-040-08	Northern Valleys	Vegetation
NV-040-09	Lincoln County	Wildland Urban Interface
NV-040-10	Ely/Lund/Duckwater	Wildland Urban Interface
NV-040-11	Cherry Creek/Goshute	Wildland Urban Interface
NV-040-12	Ely/Lund Watershed and Wildland Urban Interface	Wildland Urban Interface
NV-040-13	Caliente Watershed and Wildland Urban Interface	Wildland Urban Interface
NV-040-14	Southern Benches	High Value Habitat
NV-040-15	Northern Benches	High Value Habitat
NV-040-16	Buck and Bald/Diamond Mountains	High Value Habitat
NV-040-17	North Pahroc and Pahrnanagat	High Value Habitat
NV-040-18	Bullwhack	High Value Habitat
NV-040-19	Illipah/Wells Station/Horse and Quinn	High Value Habitat
NV-040-20	Clover/Delamar/South Pahroc/Irish	High Value Habitat
NV-040-21	Highlands and South Egan Range	High Value Habitat
NV-040-22	Kern/Snake/Cherry Creek/Park Mountain	High Value Habitat
NV-040-23	Mojave	Special Management Area
NV-040-24	Mojave and Highlands	Special Management Area
NV-040-25	Alamo and Hiko	Wildland Urban Interface

<sup>1</sup> A fire management type is assigned to each fire management unit to clearly define its primary resource management objective and fire protection values.

- 1) **Wildland fire suppression** – provide Appropriate Management Response on all wildland fires that occur within the fire management jurisdiction of the Ely District Office;
- 2) **Fuels treatments** – develop and implement prescribed fire and non-fire fuels treatments (mechanical, chemical, and biological) to create fire-safe communities, protect private property, achieve resource management objectives (see the discussion on Vegetation Resources), and restore ecological system health;
- 3) **Wildland fire use** – manage, to the extent practical for resource benefit, to improve ecological system function, and to allow fire to function as a natural part of the ecological system, approximately 8.9 million acres would be available for wildland fire use;
- 4) **Emergency stabilization and rehabilitation** – design and implement to achieve vegetation, habitat, soil stability, and watershed objectives in accordance with the Programmatic Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan; and

- 5) **Community assistance/protection** – establish an active community education and assistance program where needed to create fire-safe communities and prevent catastrophic impacts on sensitive natural resources.

**FM-4:** Incorporate and utilize Fire Regime Condition Class as a major component in fire and fuels management activities. Use Fire Regime Condition Class ratings in conjunction with vegetation objectives (see the discussion on Vegetation Resources) and other resource objectives to determine appropriate response to wildland fires and to help determine where to utilize prescribed fire, wildland fire use, or other non-fire (e.g., mechanical) fuels treatments.

**FM-5:** In addition to fire, implement mechanical, biological, and chemical treatments along with other tools and techniques to achieve vegetation, fuels, and other resource objectives.

**FM-6:** Base fire management priorities on: 1) firefighter and public safety, and 2) resource protection objectives.

**FM-7:** Implement the following management actions for desert tortoise habitat (see **Map 7**). Implement the additional conditions for desert tortoise and conditions for the Southwest willow flycatcher, White River springfish, Pahump poolfish, and Big Springs spinedace habitat contained in the 2008 Biological Opinion (Appendix D ) (also refer to discussions on Special Status Species).

- Assign a qualified resource advisor to each wildland fire to provide relevant information on the occurrence of desert tortoise and important habitat to the incident commander. The resource advisor serves as the field contact representative responsible for coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Do not authorize burning out of unburned fingers or islands of vegetation, unless it is necessary for safety.
- Establish fire camps, staging areas, and helispots in previously disturbed areas outside of ACECs, where possible, and in consultation with a qualified resource advisor. Prior to use of any area, allow a resource advisor to survey 100 percent of the area. If a desert tortoise or desert tortoise burrow is found, the area will be adjusted, if possible, to avoid the tortoise or burrow. If avoidance is not possible, a qualified desert tortoise biologist will examine the burrow for occupancy by tortoise. Any tortoise found in burrows or within the area will be relocated.
- Restrict off-road travel and use of tracked vehicles to the minimum necessary to suppress wildland fires. All vehicles will be parked as close to the road as possible using disturbed areas or wide spots in the road to turn around. All tracks will be obliterated immediately following fire suppression activities, to the extent possible.
- Provide all firefighters and support personnel with a briefing on desert tortoises and their habitat to minimize take, particularly those associated with vehicle use.



- Control the speed of fire suppression vehicles to ensure that tortoises on roads can be seen and avoided.
- If possible, rehabilitate fire lines and disturbances associated with fire suppression activities. Determine seed mixtures on a site-specific basis dependent on the probability of successful establishment. Use native and adaptive species that compete with annual invasive species or meet other objectives.
- Conduct post-fire suppression surveys to identify desert tortoise mortalities and report any take of desert tortoise.
- Pre-position suppression fences in critical areas during of periods of high fire danger.

#### ***Monitoring – Fire***

Monitoring will determine whether fire management strategies, practices, and activities are meeting resource management objectives, public concerns, and land health standards. Pre-fire condition and post-fire effects will be determined by monitoring plant community composition and trends in burn areas to determine natural recovery, responses from seed planting, and weed and cheatgrass expansion. Monitoring methods may include photo points; density, cover, and frequency plots (pre- and post-burn); fire regime condition class determination (degree of departure from natural regime); and ocular estimates.

### **Noxious and Invasive Weeds**

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and Pesticide Registration Improvement Act of 2003 direct the BLM to “. . . manage public lands according to the principles of multiple-use and sustained yield . . .” and “. . . manage the public lands to prevent unnecessary degradation . . . so they become as productive as feasible.” The “Carlson-Foley Act” (Public Law 90-583) and the “Federal Noxious Weed Act” (Public Law 93-629) direct weed control on public land. Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species, was authorized to prevent the introduction of invasive species, provide for their control, and to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts caused by these species. Nevada Revised Statute 555, Control of Insects, Pests, and Noxious Weeds, provides information regarding the designation and eradication of and inspection for noxious weeds within the State of Nevada.

#### ***Goals – Noxious and Invasive Weeds***

Prevent the introduction and spread of noxious and invasive weeds. Control or eradicate existing populations.

#### ***Objectives – Noxious and Invasive Weeds***

To reduce introduction of, and the areal extent of, noxious and invasive weed populations and the spread of these populations.

***Management Actions – Noxious and Invasive Weeds***

**WEED-1:** Continue to use integrated weed management to treat weed infestations and use principles of integrated pest management to meet management objectives and to reestablish resistant and resilient native vegetation communities.

**WEED-2:** Develop weed management plans that address weed vectors, minimize the movement of weeds within public lands, consider disturbance regimes, and address existing weed infestations.

**WEED-3:** When manual weed control is conducted, remove the cut weeds and weed parts and dispose of them in a manner designed to kill seeds and weed parts.

**WEED-4:** All straw, hay, straw/hay, or other organic products used for reclamation or stabilization activities, must be certified that all materials are free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the Ely District Office.

**WEED-5:** Where appropriate, inspect source sites such as borrow pits, fill sources, or gravel pits used to supply inorganic materials used for construction, maintenance or reclamation to ensure they are free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the Ely District Office. Inspections will be conducted by a weed scientist or qualified biologist.

**WEED-6:** Where appropriate, vehicles and heavy equipment used for the completion, maintenance, inspection, or monitoring of ground disturbing activities; for emergency fire suppression; or for authorized off-road driving will be free of soil and debris capable of transporting weed propagules. Vehicles and equipment will be cleaned with power or high pressure equipment prior to entering or leaving the work site or project area. Vehicles used for emergency fire suppression will be cleaned as a part of check-in and demobilization procedures. Cleaning efforts will concentrate on tracks, feet or tires, and on the undercarriage. Special emphasis will be applied to axles, frames, cross members, motor mounts, on and underneath steps, running boards, and front bumper/brush guard assemblies. Vehicle cabs will be swept out and refuse will be disposed of in waste receptacles. Cleaning sites will be recorded using global positioning systems or other mutually acceptable equipment and provided to the Ely District Office Weed Coordinator or designated contact person.

**WEED-7:** Animals used on public lands by special recreation permittees or by contractors for weed control or reclamation will be cleaned, quarantined, and fed weed-free feed prior to being used or released on public lands. The length of this quarantine will be specified in the special recreation permit or contract.

**WEED-8:** Prior to the entry of vehicles and equipment to a planned disturbance area, a weed scientist or qualified biologist will identify and flag areas of concern. The flagging will alert personnel or participants to avoid areas of concern.

**WEED-9:** To minimize the transport of soil-borne noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes, infested soils or materials will not be moved and redistributed on weed-free or relatively weed-free areas. In areas where infestations are identified or noted and infested soils, rock, or overburden must be moved, these materials will be salvaged and stockpiled adjacent to the area from which they were stripped. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimize wind and water erosion of these stockpiles. During reclamation, the materials will be returned to the area from which they were stripped.

**WEED-10:** Prior to project approval, a site-specific weed survey will occur and a weed risk assessment will be completed. Monitoring will be conducted for a period no shorter than the life of the permit or until bond release and monitoring reports will be provided to the Ely District Office. If the presence and/or spread of noxious weeds is noted, appropriate weed control procedures will be determined in consultation with Ely District Office personnel and will be in compliance with the appropriate BLM Handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations. All weed control efforts on BLM-administered lands will be in compliance with BLM Handbook H-9011, H 9011-1 Chemical Pest Control, H-9014 Use of Biological Control Agents of Pests on Public Lands, and H-9015 Integrated Pest Management. Submission of Pesticide Use Proposals and Pesticide Application Records will be required.

#### ***Monitoring – Noxious and Invasive Weeds***

Monitoring of noxious and invasive weeds within the planning area will continue in cooperation with the State of Nevada, counties, and private interests as well as other federal agencies. Inventories to identify new introductions, distribution, and density of noxious weed populations will be carried out on an annual basis in cooperation with these entities as follows:

- Known noxious weed sites that are identified for treatment will be visited each year and evaluated for effectiveness of control.
- Known sites not identified for treatment will be visited as funding is available.
- All known sites visited will be located with a global positioning system unit (or other suitable technology), measured, and a determination of the need for future treatment will be made.
- Inventories for new noxious weeds will be conducted within the planning area subject to funding. Emphasis will be placed on areas having a high potential for weed introduction and dispersal, such as road corridors and off-highway vehicle trails.
- All burned areas (natural and prescribed) will be surveyed for noxious weeds following the burn as funding becomes available. Any newly discovered sites will be located with a global positioning system unit, measured, and a determination of the need for future treatment will be made.

## **Special Designations Management**

This section deals with a variety of special designations mandated by a number of laws, regulations, and policies. Included are ACECs, the BLM's Back Country Byway program, wilderness designated by Congress, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic rivers, and other special designations such as National Historic Trails.

Section 202(c)(3) of Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandates that priority be given to the designation and protection of ACECs. These areas are defined in section 103(a) as areas where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important values, resources, systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

### ***Goals – Special Designations Management***

Evaluate areas of interest for special designation and appropriately manage those areas that meet necessary requirements.

### ***Objectives – Special Designations Management***

To ensure that multiple use activities within the planning area are consistent with the management plans developed for special designation areas such as ACECs.

### ***Management Actions – Special Designations Management***

#### **Parameter – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

**SD-1:** Manage the Kane Springs, Mormon Mesa, and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs primarily for the recovery of the desert tortoise (203,670 acres) (see **Map 23** and **Table 26**; also see Appendices C and D).

**SD-2:** Develop management plans for the Kane Springs, Beaver Dam Slope, Mormon Mesa, and Lower Meadow Valley Wash ACECs within 3 years to address and implement multiple-use management actions and conservation measures for desert tortoise and Southwestern willow flycatcher. When completing the management plan for Lower Meadow Valley Wash ACEC, all Union Pacific rights-of-way (approximately 2,675 acres) located within the ACEC will receive special consideration noting the legal limitations contained in the right-of-way grants (also see Appendix D).

**SD-3:** Designate 16 ACECs totaling an additional 106,980 acres. See **Map 23** and **Table 26** for additional information including management prescriptions for each of the ACECs.

Table 26  
Management Prescriptions for ACECs<sup>1</sup>

<b>Baker Archaeological Site (80 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No New Roads
Livestock management	Unavailable
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Baking Powder Flat (13,640 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III, IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy/Closed
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No New Roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Beaver Dam Slope (36,800 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Limited <sup>9</sup> /avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Closed/limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy with exception <sup>10</sup>
Locatable minerals	Closed <sup>11</sup>
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Unavailable
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>

Table 26 (Continued)

<b>Blue Mass Scenic Area (950 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	I
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited, no new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Closed
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Condor Canyon (4,500 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II, III
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy/Closed
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Open <sup>6</sup>
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Highland Range (6,900 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III, IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy/Closed
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Closed
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>

Table 26 (Continued)

<b>Honeymoon Hill/City of Rocks (3,900 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III, IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Open <sup>6</sup>
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Kane Springs (57,190 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Limited <sup>9</sup> /avoidance <sup>2</sup> /exclusion area
Off-highway vehicle use	Closed/limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	I, II, III, IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	Closed
Locatable minerals	Closed <sup>11</sup>
Mineral materials	Limited <sup>13</sup>
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Unavailable
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Lower Meadow Valley Wash (25,000 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II, III, IV
Plant collecting	Closed
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Open <sup>14</sup>
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Closed
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>

Table 26 (Continued)

<b>Mount Irish (15,100 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II, III
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy/Closed
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Closed
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Mormon Mesa (109,680 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Limited <sup>9</sup> /avoidance <sup>2</sup> /exclusion area
Off-highway vehicle use	Closed/limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	I, II, III, IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy with exception <sup>10</sup>
Locatable minerals	Closed <sup>11</sup>
Mineral materials	Limited <sup>13</sup>
Lands disposal	No disposal
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Unavailable
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Pahroc Rock Art (2,400 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II/III
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Open <sup>6</sup>
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>



Table 26 (Continued)

<b>Rose Guano Bat Cave (40 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Open <sup>6</sup>
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Schlesser Pincushion (4,930 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Shooting Gallery (15,600 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup> ; valid existing rights will remain in effect
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	II, III
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy/Closed
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Open <sup>6</sup>
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>

Table 26 (Continued)

<b>Shoshone Ponds (1,240 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Exclusion area; rights-of-way will not be granted within the area
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III
Plant collecting	Closed
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Available <sup>6</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Closed
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Snake Creek Indian Burial Cave (40 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>4</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Open <sup>6</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Unavailable
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>
<b>Swamp Cedar (3,200 acres)</b>	
<b>Management Activities</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b>
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>4</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III
Plant collecting	Closed
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	Limited
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Closed
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>

Table 26 (Continued)

White River Valley (13,100 acres)	
Management Activities	Management Prescriptions
Land Use Authorization	Avoidance area <sup>2</sup>
Off-highway vehicle use	Limited <sup>3</sup>
Visual resource management class	III, IV
Plant collecting	Limited <sup>4</sup>
Road maintenance	Limited <sup>5</sup>
Leasable minerals	No surface occupancy
Locatable minerals	Closed
Mineral materials	Closed
Lands disposal	No disposals
Fire management	Limited <sup>12</sup>
Transportation	No new roads
Livestock management	Available <sup>8</sup>
Fuelwood cutting	Not applicable
Renewable energy	Closed <sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acres within the existing Beaver Dam Slope, Kane Springs, and Mormon Mesa ACECs are those within the planning area (see **Map 23**).

<sup>2</sup> Avoidance area; granting rights-of-way (surface, subsurface, aerial) within the area will be avoided, but rights-of-way may be granted if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated.

<sup>3</sup> Off-highway vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails. Areas within ACECs designated as wilderness are closed to off-highway vehicle use.

<sup>4</sup> Plant materials, including common species, may be collected by permit only.

<sup>5</sup> Road maintenance is limited to the designated roadway; shoulder barrow/ditch construction is limited to only that necessary to ensure public safety and serviceability of the road.

<sup>6</sup> The activity is allowed in the area. NEPA compliance and clearances for cultural resources and threatened and endangered species required for some activities.

<sup>7</sup> Closed to renewable energy facilities; avoidance area for ancillary rights-of-way for access roads, transmission lines, and pipelines.

<sup>8</sup> Livestock grazing is controlled through terms and conditions on the grazing permit.

<sup>9</sup> Rights-of-way; limit authorization of future communication sites to existing established rights-of-way unless technically unfeasible and encourage use of existing corridors for all future rights-of-way when possible.

<sup>10</sup> Exception requires Section 7 consultation with a no adverse impact conclusion.

<sup>11</sup> Subject to exception for valid claims existing prior to designation as an ACEC.

<sup>12</sup> Limits could be placed on fire management activities.

<sup>13</sup> Closed except for free use permits and federal highway material site rights-of-way on a 1-mile corridor, 0.5 mile each side of road on three designated roads.

<sup>14</sup> Open with special stipulations. Open to mineral material activities subject to controlled surface use, seasonal timing restrictions, restricted or no uses in avoidance areas (e.g., riparian areas, live water, areas with special wildlife or plant features, and sensitive viewsheds), additional NEPA analysis, and Section 7 consultation.

#### Parameter – Back Country Byways

**SD-4:** Retain the Mount Wilson Back Country Byway. In addition, designate the Rainbow Canyon and the Silver State Trail as back country byways (see **Map 24**).

#### Parameter – Designated Wilderness

**SD-5:** Manage 22 designated wilderness areas in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964; the Nevada Wilderness Protection Act of 1989; the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004; the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act of 2006.

Twenty-two designated wilderness areas totaling approximately 1.1 million acres have been designated by Congress in this decision area. This includes six citizen-proposed areas of wilderness quality that were not managed by the Ely District Office as wilderness study areas (see **Map 23**).

### **Parameter – Wilderness Study Areas**

**SD-6:** The Ely District Office currently manages the Park Range and Riordan's Well wilderness study areas in Nye County. Portions of the Blue Eagle and Antelope Range wilderness study areas, which are managed by the Battle Mountain District Office, also overlap with the planning area. Wilderness study areas within the planning area total approximately 81,000 acres. Manage wilderness study areas under the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review until such time as Congress makes a determination regarding wilderness designations. Manage lands identified as having wilderness characteristics to protect those characteristics through a variety of other land use plan decisions such as establishing visual resource management class objectives to preserve the existing landscape; attaching conditions to permits, leases, and other authorizations; and establishing limited or closed off-highway vehicle designations. Manage lands released from wilderness study area designation by Congress in the same manner as surrounding lands. In the event that lands released from wilderness study area designation are protected under some other special designation, those lands will retain those protections (e.g., ACECs within a wilderness study area). Wilderness study area lands not retained under some other special designation will be released for other purposes and uses. These other special designations are not a substitute for wilderness designation but provide specific management prescriptions to protect important resources.

### **Parameter – Other Special Designations**

This section describes management for special designations other than those described in the previous subsections. The types of special designations include scenic areas, geologic areas, natural areas, research natural areas, and rock hound areas. No herd management areas are recommended for designation as wild horse ranges.

No rivers have been identified for wild and scenic designation within the planning area. A full inventory and evaluation has not occurred. This evaluation potentially could identify rivers or river segments within the Ely District Office jurisdiction that are eligible for inclusion under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. If appropriate, management actions associated with these locations will be amended to the RMP.

**SD-7:** Manage the three special designation areas that are retained as follows (see Management Action SD-3 and **Map 23**):

- White River Narrows Archaeological District (500 acres)
  1. Roads – Maintenance of existing roads (except State Route 318) will only be allowed if it is determined that maintenance will not have an effect on the setting and features that placed this site on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. New roads will not be permitted.

2. Structures – Maintenance and construction of structures is allowed if identified in existing habitat management plans or if needed for management of natural values.
- The Garnet Hill Rock Hounding Area (totaling 1,210 acres)
    1. This entire area will be segregated from disposal under the public land laws. The recreation site (160 acres) will be closed to solid leasable, locatable, and mineral materials. In addition, the 160 acres will have a no surface occupancy condition for fluid minerals leasing.
  - The Rock Animal Corral Archaeological Area (160 acres)
    1. The area will be closed to solid leasable, locatable, and mineral materials. In addition, the area will have a no surface occupancy condition for fluid mineral leasing.

**SD-8:** Designate the following 7 areas as ACECs (see Management Action SD-3 and **Map 23**):

- Scenic Areas – Blue Mass
- Natural Areas – Shoshone Ponds, Swamp Cedar
- Archaeological Sites – Rose Guano Bat Cave, Snake Creek Indian Burial Cave, Baker, Mount Irish

**SD-9:** Drop the following nine areas, totaling 2,275 acres from special designation status:

- Scenic Areas – Kious Spring, Weaver Creek
- Geologic Areas – Goshute Cave, Leviathan Cave, Cave Valley Cave, Whipple Cave
- Research Natural Areas – Pygmy Sage
- Archaeological Sites – Baker Creek, Garrison

### ***Monitoring – Special Designations Management***

Areas managed as a special designation (such as ACECs, back country byways, and designated wilderness) will be monitored annually to determine if the resource values for which the area was designated are stable. Monitoring will focus on threats to resource values and the effectiveness of management provisions in protecting and preserving those resource values. Monitoring will assist the BLM in tracking resource conditions and making effective decisions to improve conditions for the special resource over time. Where necessary, the monitoring strategy for special designation areas will be refined during activity level planning, e.g., development of ACEC management plans and designated wilderness management plans.

## REFERENCES

Bradley, P. V., M. J. O'Farrell, J. A. Williams, and J. E. Newmark, editors. 2006. The Revised Nevada Bat Conservation Plan. The Nevada Bat Working Group. June 2006. Reno, Nevada. 216 pp.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 2007. Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Ely District. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Ely Field Office, Ely, Nevada. November 2007.

BLM. 2006. Bureau of Land Management National Scenic and Historic Trails Strategy and Work Plan. Produced by U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, National Landscape Conservation System, National Scenic and Historic Trails Program. BLM-WO-GI-06-020-6250. Washington, D.C.

BLM. 2001. National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. January 19, 2001.

BLM. 1986. Ely Cave Management Plan for the Ely District. Bureau of Land Management. Ely District. Ely, Nevada. 1986.

BLM 1984. Manual 8400 – Visual Resource Management. Internet website: <http://www.blm.gov/nstc/VRM/8400.html>.

City of Caliente. 1992. City of Caliente Master Plan. 1992.

Desert Tortoise Council. 1999. Proceedings of 1999 Symposium Reports and Papers Presented at the 24th Annual Symposium of the Desert Tortoise Council, March 5-8, 1999. St. George, Utah.

Desert Tortoise Council. 1994. Proceedings of the 1994 Desert Tortoise Council Symposium.

Gnomon. 2004. Technical Report: Cultural Resources Analysis and Probability Model for the Bureau of Land Management, Ely District. Authors M. Drews and E. Ingbar. June 7, 2004.

Lincoln County. 2001. Lincoln County Master Plan.

Lincoln County. 1997. Lincoln County Public Land and Natural Resource Management Plan.

National Research Council. 1999. Hardrock Mining on Federal Lands. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 247 p.

National Research Council. 1994. Rangeland Health: New Ways to Classify, Inventory, and Monitor Rangelands. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C. 180 pp.

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

---

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. 1999. Nevada Smoke Management Plan. State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Nevada Division of Water Planning. 1999. Nevada State Water Plan. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Carson City, Nevada. Internet web site: <http://dcnr.nv.gov/nrp/waterpl.htm>.

Nye County. 1985. Nye County Policy Plan for Public Lands.

Sherve, C. W. 2001. Location, Location, Location: Archaeological Models and PaleoIndian Sites in Nevada. Master's Thesis, University of Nevada, Reno.

Swanson, S. (ed.) 2006. Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook. Second Edition. Educational Bulletin 06-03. 81 p.

U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2006. Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Development; BLM/WO/ST-06/021+3071. BLM, Denver, Colorado. 84 p. Available at [http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/oil\\_and\\_gas/best\\_management\\_practices/gold\\_book.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/oil_and_gas/best_management_practices/gold_book.html).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1998. Interim Air Quality Policy on Wildland and Prescribed Fires. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/t1/memoranda/firefnl.pdf>. 43 pp. April 23, 1998.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2008. Programmatic Biological Opinion (84320-2008-F-0078), Informal Consultation (84320-2008-I-0079), and Technical Assistance (84320-2008-TA-0080) for the Bureau of Land Management's Ely District Resource Management Plan. Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, Las Vegas, Nevada. July 2008. 238 p.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1994. Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon. 73 pages plus appendices.

White Pine County. 1998. White Pine County Land Use Plan.